

Circular Supplier Due Diligence Framework

Ten questions to ask before you appoint a circular furniture supplier. Drawn from 37 years in the market.

The circular office furniture market has grown fast. More suppliers. More claims. More certificates. Most buyers have no way to tell the credible ones from the rest. **These ten questions, drawn from 37 years of trading in this market, give you a practical filter before you commit.**

TEN QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING

1 How long have you been operating?

Not how long the brand has existed. How long the business has been trading in circular office furniture specifically. Five years is not long. Fifteen is.

6 Can you provide references from similar organisations?

Not testimonials. References you can contact. From organisations similar in size and sector to yours.

2 Have you traded through a recession?

Sustainability commitments collapse under budget pressure. Suppliers who have not seen this do not know how to respond. Those who have tend to be leaner, more resourceful, and more honest.

7 Do you provide a post-clearance report?

This should include items reused, donated with recipient organisations named, recycled by weight, and carbon avoided through reuse and refurbishment. If not standard, ask why.

3 Can you tell me exactly where my furniture went?

Not a category. Not a certificate. A specific organisation, a specific number of items, and a confirmed value or outcome. If they cannot provide this, the claim is unverifiable.

8 Who owns the business?

Owner-managed businesses tend to stand behind their work more directly than intermediaries or brokers who subcontract. Accountability follows ownership.

4 What happens to items you cannot reuse or refurbish?

Good suppliers follow a clear hierarchy: reuse, refurbishment, resale, responsible recycling. If recycling is the first answer, ask more questions.

9 What do you do when something goes wrong?

Every supplier makes mistakes. The question is whether they have a clear, practiced answer, and whether it sounds like something they have actually had to do.

5 Do you carry out assessments before quoting?

A supplier who quotes without seeing the furniture is guessing. An assessment first means they can tell you what is viable and what is not, which protects you from a job that underdelivers.

10 What would you tell us not to do?

A supplier with real experience will have an honest answer. One who is only selling will not. This question separates conviction from opportunity.

THE FILTER THAT MATTERS

In a market where everyone claims to be circular, longevity is one of the few signals that cannot be faked. **A business that has traded through multiple economic cycles, adapted, and is still here has demonstrated something a five-year-old startup with good branding cannot yet demonstrate.**