

**How good a supplier are you, really? – by Simon Kennish**

Do you ever reflect on how good a supplier you really are?

Once the contract has been won, is that the end of it, or do you regularly or irregularly reflect on your team’s performance? Looking for ways to improve the service you are providing to clients, or even to stop it just falling off a cliff.

Below is a simple table showing the range of service delivery for each area, be honest with yourself and see where you rate your own performance on your contracts. If it’s mostly poor, then you have some big issues and need to take urgent action. If it’s mostly Ok, then that’s a good start but not setting the world on fire. If it’s mostly Brilliant, then why not ask your clients to recommend you to other clients as an introduction. If suppliers are genuinely in the Brilliant zone, then clients would no doubt be happy to recommend you to their professional colleagues

Area	Poor	Ok	Brilliant
Time	Doesn’t have a delivery plan, will just wing it Deliver late (if at all) Doesn’t warn the client that will be late Deliver too early without checking to see if the client was able to accept it	Has a credible delivery plan Delivers on time	Keep the client informed of progress, highlighting any risks or issues that may affect delivery on time Checks with other suppliers about any timing interfaces
Cost	Invoices more than was agreed Fails to invoice or invoices very late (client project may have closed its books) Coming back for extras that are clearly in the scope Cost for changes are unreasonable	Invoices the right amount Invoices promptly when all pre-conditions are met Advises client of the cost of any changes before they are undertaken, and seeks approval upfront Costs for changes are reasonable	Comes in under the approved contract sum, offers any savings made on quantities in an open and honest way



Area	Poor	Ok	Brilliant
Quality	Undertakes poor design work. Provides poor professional advice. Uses sub-standard materials. Has poor quality workmanship. Has poor documentation such as design drawings, final accounts, info on changes or programme Uses poor contract management team, could be lacking competence or commitment, or demonstrating poor behaviours	Comes up with acceptable design work and sound professional advice Uses correct materials Has suitable quality workmanship Has decent documentation that is reliable  Has good contract management team, competent and committed, demonstrating good behaviours	Actively looks to improve design in order to reduce time and cost or improve quality. Suggests alternative materials which may be better or cheaper Actively shares information with other suppliers on programme interfaces Supports good contract management with good back office team
Stakeholder Management	Ignores stakeholders needs	Considers stakeholders needs	Actively engages stakeholders using Stakeholder Management techniques to ensure the best outcome for the project delivery by anticipating their needs and managing expectations
Resource Management	Inadequate resources to deliver the contract, conceals the lack of resources until it is discovered when it could be too late to take corrective action Abandons the contract once they have spent the tendered sum irrespective as to whether they have delivered or not	Has suitable and sufficient resources to deliver the contract	Uses Resource Mapping techniques to ensure the right resources will be available at the right time to ensure other areas are not compromised such as quality or time
Risk Management & Issue Resolution	Ignores risks and issues until they turn into a massive problem	Reacts to issues as they arise	Actively considers the contract risks ahead and puts things in place to



Area	Poor	Ok	Brilliant
			reduce those risks. Keeps an Issue Log and actively manages issues, being open and honest with the client and other suppliers in order to find the best outcome for all
Health & Safety	H&S – yeah we have a H&S Plan somewhere, but no one ever uses it Little H&S compliance apparent on site	We have all the right documents and our site team stick to them to ensure they all go home at night	Actively look to reduce H&S risks and encourage other suppliers to do the same
Communications	We don't tell anyone anything, it all comes as a complete surprise when things don't go as planned	We keep the team up to speed on that is happening	Actively encourage open and honest discussions with the entire team to ensure everyone knows what's going on and working together as one larger team
Scope	Fail to deliver what is actually required, either by failing to understand it or just cutting corners to save money	Deliver the agreed scope	Go above and beyond the agreed scope, bringing more value to the contract.

Bio Notes - Simon Kennish FRICS, MAPM, MCMI is a Chartered Surveyor, Project and Programme Manager with a passion for delivering major projects and programmes in both the public and private sectors. [www.simonkennish.com](http://www.simonkennish.com)

