



## THE 12 CRITICAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR A CONTRACT MANUFACTURER



### 1. Capabilities

- Does the co-manufacturer's equipment have all of the necessary features in place to ensure your product meets or exceeds your required specifications?
- As you discuss your plans for future growth, does the firm indicate a willingness to add any necessary capabilities to support your growth?



### 2. People

- Does the firm have proven training programs in place with retention testing to ensure that your products are being processed by a trained and experienced workforce?
- Does the firm view its people as expendable resources or demonstrate genuine care for them, ensuring your products are being processed by a tenured and loyal workforce?



### 3. Certifications

- Has the firm received top audit scores from respected industry quality organizations (GFSI, BRC, SQF, AIB, FDA, USDA, ISO, HACCP, etc.)?
- Does the firm have the approval of food standard certifying bodies (kosher, organic, halal, etc.) that you need for your products?



## **4. Protection**

- Does the firm have a mentality that they are an extension of you, valuing and protecting your brands and products as if they were their own?
- Do their quality and food safety procedures provide protection for your brands at or above the levels you would expect of your own plants?
- Can you trust that your intellectual property, formulations, and business in general are not at risk due to the knowledge the firm will gain about your business?
- Does the firm have contingency plans in place in case of unexpected occurrences that would affect their capacity?
- Does the firm have a solid financial position that would allow them to avoid business stoppages that would cause supply interruptions?



## **5. Customer Service**

- Does the firm have a highly educated, trained, and professional staff to ensure responsiveness to your needs?
- Will the firm place a dedicated customer service representative to work on your account so that your special requests are consistently recognized and addressed?



## **6. Problem Solving**

- Does the firm approach your problems with an ownership that demonstrates they view them as their problems as well?
- Does the firm's staff have demonstrated technical experience in the areas that are critical to your projects?
- Does the training and culture of the firm foster desire and ability to go past normal delivery of requests to solving your problems and continuously improving?



## **7. Allergen Handling**

- Does the firm have adequate policies in regard to segregation, identification, and sequencing that ensure against cross contamination?
- Does the firm have in-house testing capabilities to prove the absence of allergens in addition to outside lab resources?



## ***8. Price***

- Considering everything the firm provides, does their pricing provide you with the best value compared to their competition?
- Does the firm cut any corners in important areas that may compromise your quality and risk your brand simply to provide the most attractive pricing?



## ***9. Face-to-Face Interaction***

- Has the firm provided indications that they will interact with you consistently, valuing your business over the long term past simply securing you as a new customer?
- Does the firm have performance measures in place that are meaningful to you and that they plan to share with you on a consistent basis?



## ***10. Scheduling***

- Are the hours of operations for logistics adequate to suit your needs?
- Can the firm demonstrate a track record of on-time delivery that acceptable?



## ***11. Inventory***

- Does the firm have a system in place that will demonstrate accurate understanding of the stock levels and warehouse locations of your products?
- Does the firm have a reporting system that aligns adequately with your systems?



## ***12. Track Record***

- Does the firm have longevity in the industry with a clean record in all areas of accountability (legal, environmental, recall, employment practices, OSHA, etc.)?
- Can the firm supply customer references that are respectable and provide reassurance of their ability to meet and exceed your expectations?

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