

OFFICE OF HORACE TRUMBAUER

TOP 9

QUESTIONS

TO ASK EVERY

HOME BUILDER

B4 YOU SIGN

E-Book Author: Chris Frank



CONTRACT

1. Experience vs. Good Intentions –

How long has the firm you are considering been in business?

New companies want to do the right thing. The only problem is, without enough experience “they don’t know what that they don’t know” and you don’t want to get financially hurt by their inexperience.

Lack of experience almost always results in cost overruns. Major oversights can cost you thousands and often months of additional work to fix major mistakes

Nothing can be replaced by experience....decades of experience. Over time processes can be improved and streamlined which can make remodeling jobs a more predictable planned result.

WITHOUT experience, details are missed, mistakes are made, and time to complete the project will result in cost overruns.

Why Choose Us?

At the Office of Horace Trumbauer you will be dealing with a multi-generation home building firm. We have the experience, the knowledge and the confidence to get the job done on time and on budget.

Our process has been honed and passed on from one son to another for 4 generations. Where else can you get the experience like that?



2. References are Crucial –

Are Past Customers Satisfied?

Issues pop up on almost any project and it is vital that you know how your contractor has handled them in the past.

This is important because you will be depending on good communication and decision making from your home builder or remodeling contractor. If their past clients tell you they had poor communication or that the builder made a lot of bad judgement calls along the way, you can likely expect to have similar problems with your project.

It's much better to identify "red flags" before you give a contractor your trust and your hard earned money. This document can serve as the guide to help you make the right decision by asking the right questions.

"You are going to be depending on us to make decisions in your best interest. We don't take this responsibility lightly. To us, it's an honor."

Chris Frank –CEO Office of Horace Trumbauer

The Horace Trumbauer-Frank Historic Legacy

In 1908 William Ott Frank joined the Horace Trumbauer team as their chief engineer and draftsman. His son, William Edward, joined the firm in 1937 after being discharged from the Army Corps of Engineers following World War II.



Three generations of his family have overseen the Horace Trumbauer legacy of creating masterpieces ever since. For over 100 years, Horace Trumbauer has designed, built and restored hundreds of homes across the United States, and is a recognized leader of excellence within the housing industry.

3. Referrals Tells You a Lot-

What percentage of their business is based on referrals?

Builders may have a difficult time answering this question, especially if they have few clients and even fewer referrals. However, just asking the question can tell you a lot about their confidence (or lack thereof) when it comes to maintaining long term relationships with their clients.

Why Choose US?

At Horace Trumbauer we have enjoyed a 75 percent customer referral rate. This is astronomically high for the industry. Why do we get so many referrals? Ask yourself, what would it take for you to refer your friends, family or colleagues to a home builder?



Most of our referral clients tell us that their friends or family felt they could trust us; they had confidence that we would do an excellent job and that we have a good relationship overall with them. That only occurs when you do things correctly, decade after decade.

We would be happy to connect you with our existing customers so you can ask them your tough questions directly. Not many builders will do that, we can assure you.

4. Portfolio vs Project Needs –

Does the company specialize in the type of work you are interested in having done?

Get a look at previous projects they have completed. Do so in person if at all possible. We recommend you look at the work the home remodeler has completed to determine if the quality is up to your standards.

At Horace Trumbauer, we have seen, and in most cases have done, it ALL. After over a century of doing business from Florida to Connecticut and as far west as Colorado Springs, we have completed thousands of projects nation-wide and would relish the opportunity to share our masterpieces with you.

5. License, Insurance and Claims -

Is the company you are considering Licensed and Insured?

Do they have any claims against them?

If you sign a contract with a home remodeler, and they don't fulfill their end of the bargain, it is much harder to get any resolution to your claim if they are not insured. The good news is there are several online resources you can use to check out whether the company you are considering has any claims against them or has a bad reputation.

We recommend searching on Google for "company name + complaints" to see if there are any recent complaints about the business.

You can also go to <http://www.ripoffreport.com/>

Find out if there are any formal complaints before you sign a contract. It's better to find this out in advance than after the fact.

Our Clean Record

After over 100 years and thousands of projects, we have zero claims against us. This is truly an AMAZING statistic. All of our state and local licenses are valid for the states in which we work.

Our certifications from the National Association of Home Builders are continually updated and we are very proud of our history of continuing education in the ever-changing Building Science world.

6. Latest Technology –

What is the company policy on using the latest and greatest technology solutions?

We believe it is our responsibility, and just good business, to stay in tune with the constantly evolving world of Building Science. With constantly changing new technology and building processes, there are almost an infinite number of reasons why products and service providers disappear from the market.

That is why we live by the philosophy that the senior Frank drilled into all of his staff beginning in 1934, "We want to stay on the cutting edge of new products, but not on the bleeding edge."

We make sure the products we use and recommend to our clients are endorsed by key players in the marketplace, so that if there is ever a support concern, you know that a major company – with a major reputation - is standing behind the installed components in your home.

7. Continuing Education –

Does the company continually educate their staff? What titles or certifications have been earned? If not, Why?

You want your doctor to know the latest improvements in the medical field before they operate on you. Demand the same from the people working on your home. We believe education is mandatory and our certifications are always the very latest offered.

Why Choose US?

Every year we spend weeks bolstering our education, attending International Builder Shows and classes, classes and more classes! At Horace Trumbauer, we live the philosophy that Knowledge is Power.

8. Costs & Profit Disclosure –

Does the company you are considering share with you how they make their money?

The importance of education doesn't stop with the builder. It makes a big difference for you as the client, too. Ask your prospective builder about their gross profit margin and see if they will share a breakdown of their costs with you. In our decades in business, cost has consistently been a top concern across the construction industry.

*Wouldn't it be nice to know the project's exact costs BEFORE you get started?
Wouldn't it be nice to be aware of the costs as the project proceeds so you can continually have control of where your dollars are being spent?*

We Disclose It All To YOU!

As a Cost Plus firm, we share ALL costs related to the project BEFORE we get started. Our profit is clearly reflected in our Cost to Complete, down to the penny. Twice a month we will provide you with updated information and we will share with you all costs and potential changes to the project so you are never surprised.

Additionally, this information is available to you in real time on our proprietary software. We continually manage to exceed your expectations and believe that transparency is critical to the level of trust we strive to achieve with each of our clients.

9. Supervision & Management –

Who is actually going to be on site, building your project?

Many home builders have a slick sales person who comes in to develop the project and the specifications. But once they seal the deal, they pass you off to a sub-contractor with who you don't know or have a relationship. All too often this causes miscommunication, general chaos and mistrust. Your relationship with your builder should be based on transparency, honesty, and trust; in other words a true relationship.

****Find out who you will be dealing with throughout the entire project not just during the initial project discussion.***

Why Horace Trumbauer is the Only Choice for Excellence in PA

For over 100 years, the Frank family has managed high-profile projects ranging from Duke University in North Carolina to custom homes right here in Pennsylvania.

Chris Frank joined his father on job sites as early as eight years old, and Brendan Frank (Chris' son) has had the same experience. Chris, along with Brendan, supervise all of Horace Trumbauer's projects, and nobody else.

That means you will ALWAYS be assured that a principle is supervising the day-to-day work on your project, and that they are bringing with them the experience, accountability and commitment of an owner. Just like you.

If you have a project coming up that you would like us to brainstorm with you, just give us a CALL at (724) 436-5230 and ask for Chris.

Here is a Testimonial from a Recent Customer:

We thought considering you took the time to download this document that we should also share a testimonial.

"The first time we worked with The Office of Horace Trumbauer and Chris Frank was 2011. They were hired to renovate our lower level. Chris oversaw all day-to-day operations. He was always the first to arrive in the morning making sure the trades knew what they were expected to accomplish, and always the last to leave at the end of the day, reviewing what had been accomplished and checking on quality control.

His expectations for the tradesmen was extremely high, both in the work that they were doing and how they conducted themselves while at our home. This was extremely important given that we had three small children. The quality of the work that went into our home exceeded the workmanship and lack of expertise that had gone into the original construction home just years before, of which, The Office of Horace Trumbauer, unfortunately, was not our initial contractor.

Upon completion of our project, we had said numerous times, that we wish we had The Office of Horace Trumbauer build our house, as most of the shortcuts that were taken created problems that would have NEVER occurred if Chris was running the show.

Due to the daily interaction with Chris while he worked on our home and the way that he viewed our project as more than just another job, we developed a very close relationship with him. For several years after that, we hired Chris to tackle jobs around our house, both big and small, and he was always quick to get to it, making sure that the appointed task was done properly.

In many ways, he would go the extra mile and do things for us that one would not expect from a general contractor. In one instance, he surprised us by having his wife paint a faux stone pattern on an access door located in our foundation wall so it would match the existing decorative stonework helping the plain flat door to disappear.

Chris sent me gentle reminders about oiling our butcher block countertop, which they had just refinished, to help keep it in tip top condition. Chris handled tasks that we were too busy to get to right away so that future projects could stay in motion. All of these are hallmarks of a businessman that sees more than dollar signs when working with clients.

Our trust in him and his abilities led us to hire The Office of Horace Trumbauer more recently in April of 2015 to do a complete renovation, in and out, of a condominium that we had purchased. Because the condominium was over 90 minutes away and the typical demands on our lives did not allow us to get there frequently, we asked The Office of Horace Trumbauer to take complete responsibility for every aspect of this project: hiring and managing trades closer to the condominium, sourcing and purchasing materials, showing up daily before any trades arrived, supervising ALL aspects of the work, and the shutting down and locking up before driving an hour and a half home, every day for over 6 months.

When various problems were discovered, Chris looked at all possible solutions, secured competitive pricing, then presented his suggestions to us so we could make an intelligent decision prior to proceeding.

To have that much trust in one person says a lot about what we have observed and learned about his character and work ethic. He helped to transform an outdated, energy draining home into a modern, energy efficient living space with many of the conveniences we enjoy in our main home.

It was Chris's idea to install a whole house water filter because of the poor water quality in the surrounding area, installing a Solar tube which brings natural light into our windowless Master bath and replace and expand an aging hot water heater to an energy efficient hot water heater that permits us to have multiple users simultaneously. The result of this construction project exceeded our expectations and we have enjoyed using this new home immensely for the last few months.

The aspect of this job that is most impressive is that Chris worked on this while fighting Cancer. Even when his energy was low and his pain was high, he showed up and maintained high standards for himself and everyone involved in the project.

Clearly, he sees his work as a reflection of who he is-dependable, trustworthy, skilled, organized, and an all-around good, kind person."

Commercial Projects:

The Office of Horace Trumbauer has handled very large projects up and down the east coast. Here are a few examples.



You can see more of our work by [clicking here](#).

Residential Projects:

We are also very experienced at remodeling and restoring homes. Here are a few examples:



You can see more of our work by [clicking here](#).

In Conclusion:

If you are contemplating building a new home, or simply need your current home to be restored or upgraded using the latest in energy efficient technologies definitely consider The Office of Horace Trumbauer. Chris Frank focuses on attention to detail, solid communication and quality of service that cannot be undervalued.

Don't take a chance on a home builder that doesn't have decades of experience and that isn't a recognized authority in the area.

You will be thrilled with the professionalism and wealth of knowledge that our team can provide even before you start the project.



All YOU Have to Do is Take the First Step!

Contact Us Today to discuss your Home Remodeling Project!

Call US Direct at (724) 481-1411