YOUR READING MAP

Choose with evidence

For small shops, makers and service businesses.

Your mission

Compare two or three suppliers against the same brief. Check the evidence, test a small order and write down why you chose one.

03-04 / Define a good fit

Meet Maya and write a clear buying brief.

05-07 / Compare and test

Compare total cost, check samples and verify claims.

08-09 / Decide and agree

Use a scorecard and record the terms.

10-11 / Explore 10 business ideas

Each idea has a practical first test.

12-14 / Take action

Use the seven-day plan, worksheet and source notes.

01 / UNDERSTAND IT

A cheap quote, a costly fix

Fictional example: Maya needs gift boxes for her shop.



Meet Maya.

One supplier offers a lower price. But the sample lid does not close properly and delivery timing is unclear.

Another costs more, yet answers her questions and supplies a stronger sample.

A supplier is part of your customer promise.

If packaging fails or goods arrive late, your customer still comes to you. Choose a supplier who can meet your needs consistently, not just win the first order.

☺ MAYA'S NEW RULE

"I will test the promise before I buy the volume." A friendly conversation starts the relationship; evidence supports the decision.

02 / WRITE THE BRIEF

Ask for the same thing

Clear specifications make quotes easier to compare.

Describe the item or service

Include size, material, colour, quantity and intended use. For a service, list deliverables, deadlines and what a successful result looks like.

Separate must-haves from preferences

Must-have: the box protects the product and fits its dimensions. Preference: a special finish. Set any relevant safety or compliance requirements before comparing prices.

Send a short request for quotation

“Please quote [quantity] of [specification], delivered to [place] by [date]. Include all charges, minimum order, lead time, payment terms, sample cost and defect process.”

ASK ONE MORE QUESTION

“Which parts of this brief can you not meet, and what would you change?” Save the reply with the quote.