

TOP 5 QUALITIES TO LOOK FOR IN A **CARRIER** **PARTNER**

For Logistics Brokers and 3PLs

Choosing the right carrier partner can make or break your margins, your reputation, and your customer relationships. That's why we created this checklist to help you evaluate whether your carrier is built to support your business long-term.



1. Consistent Capacity You Can Count On

A strong carrier partner should help you solve capacity challenges, not add to them.

Look for a carrier that:

- Maintains an owned or dedicated fleet rather than relying entirely on spot coverage.
- Has repeat drivers and predictable equipment availability.
- Can support recurring lanes, not just one-off moves.
- Scales up during busy seasons without last-minute cancellations.

Why this matters: Reliable capacity helps you protect customer commitments and reduces time spent scrambling for backup options.

2. Fast, Clear Communication

When things move quickly, communication matters as much as price.

A solid carrier partner:

- Responds quickly to load tenders and changes,
- Provides real-time updates without being chased,
- Flags potential issues early, before they become problems, and
- Has a direct point of contact who knows your business.

Why this matters: Clear communication builds trust with your customers and prevents minor issues from escalating.



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3. Clean Safety Record and Compliance Standards

Your carrier's performance reflects directly on your brand.

Before partnering, confirm the carrier:

- Maintains strong CSA and safety scores,
- Follows consistent driver training and compliance processes,
- Has experience with the required regulations for your freight type, and
- Takes claims prevention seriously, not reactively.

Why this matters: Fewer incidents mean fewer claims, fewer customer complaints, and less risk to your reputation.

5. Broker-Friendly Mindset

The best carrier partners understand how brokers operate.

A broker-focused carrier will:

- Respect your customer relationships,
- Follow agreed-upon processes for communication and documentation,
- Support your service standards, not undermine them, and
- Treat your freight as a shared responsibility, not just a transaction.

Why this matters: A true partner helps you look good to your customers, even when challenges come up.

4. Transparent Pricing and Fair Rate Structure

The right carrier understands broker margins and works with you, not against you.

Look for partners who:

- Offer clear, consistent pricing without surprise add-ons.
- Explain rate changes openly instead of shifting costs later.
- Understand long-term volume relationships, not just today's rate.
- Avoid bait-and-switch practices on committed lanes.

Why this matters: Predictable pricing helps you quote confidently and protect your margins.

More Than Moving Freight

The right carrier partner does more than move freight. They help you protect margins, keep customers happy, and grow with confidence.

This checklist reflects how we work with logistics brokers every day: dependable capacity, clear communication, and partnerships built for the long run.



SOLUTIONS. GUARANTEED.

About Us

Founded in 2001, Hillcrest is a family-owned company that feels like family. We believe people come first: our customers, our employees, our vendors. We are known for our friendly attitude, integrity and positivity. Our customers and vendors enjoy doing business with us, and our employees stay with us for a long time — many for their entire careers.

On Time. Every Time.

Hillcrest was founded on the belief that a transportation company is first and foremost a service company.

That's why we focus on providing exceptional customer service at every turn.

If you have a transportation challenge or need — large or small — give us a call first. We will consult with you to answer your questions, help you think through your options, and guide you to the best solution.

Locations

Norfolk, VA
Richmond, VA
Decatur, AL
Mobile, AL
Columbia, SC
Pensacola, FL
Nichols, NY

Services

Bulk Liquid
Hazardous Materials
Drayage
ISO & Shipping Container
Storage
Dry Van
Logistics
Maintenance & Repair

Office Hours

Monday-Friday
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