

Freight Carrier Partner Evaluation Checklist

Not all freight carriers are created equal. Use this checklist to evaluate your current carrier or compare new options. Rate each statement from 1 (Never true) to 5 (Always true).

1. Reliability You Can Count On

- My carrier picks up shipments on time, every time. ____
- Deliveries arrive within the expected window consistently. ____
- I rarely deal with damaged or missing freight. ____
- My carrier meets commitments without constant follow-up. ____

Section Score: ____ / 20

2. Clear, Proactive Communication

- I get timely updates without having to ask. ____
- When issues arise, my carrier tells me before I find out on my own. ____
- I have a dedicated contact who knows my account. ____
- Communication is clear, professional, and easy to follow. ____

Section Score: ____ / 20

3. Safety & Compliance You Trust

- My carrier has a strong safety record and current certifications. ____
- Drivers follow all DOT and FMCSA regulations. ____
- Equipment is well-maintained and inspected regularly. ____
- I never worry about compliance gaps putting my freight at risk. ____

Section Score: ____ / 20

4. Experience with Your Type of Freight

- My carrier understands the specific needs of my product type. ____
- They have the right equipment for my loads. ____
- They know how to handle special requirements (temp control, hazmat, oversized, etc.). ____
- I trust them with high-value or sensitive shipments. ____

Section Score: ____ / 20

5. Flexibility When Plans Change

- My carrier can adjust quickly when schedules shift. ____
- They offer solutions, not excuses, when problems come up. ____
- Capacity is available when I need it, even during peak times. ____
- They work with me to find the best option, not just the easiest one. ____

Section Score: ____ / 20

Your Total Score: ____ / 100

85 – 100: Your carrier is a strong partner. Keep the relationship going.

65 – 84: There are gaps. Time for a conversation or a closer look.

Below 65: Serious concerns. It may be time to explore other options.

Do you feel confident in your carrier, or are you constantly watching for the next issue?

That answer matters more than your score. If you find yourself always checking in, following up, or worrying about what might go wrong, that's a sign.

A good freight partner should give you peace of mind, not more stress. Trust your gut. It usually knows before the numbers do.

Want a Second Opinion?

Hillcrest Transportation helps shippers reduce risk, improve reliability, and simplify logistics. If you're unsure about your current setup, let's take a look together. Start the conversation today.

