

- \_\_\_\_\_ Can somebody in your industry association or a colleague in your community give the transportation company a good reference (or have you asked the company for references)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has the company quoted you an all-inclusive rate and guaranteed delivery time? (Avoid companies that will not commit themselves to a rate or that will let you know how much the cost is after the fact.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ What extra costs (if any) will you have to incur beyond the cost quoted?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you satisfied that the transportation company rather than your company will be fully liable for the safe delivery of the goods?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you checked with more than one carrier before making a decision to ship?
- \_\_\_\_\_ For purposes of comparison, did you check with U.S. domiciled carriers for lower back-haul rates?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you included intermediaries (middlemen) such as shippers' agents, forwarders, brokers, and shippers' associations in your evaluation?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are your sales within a region growing enough for you to consider larger volume shipment consolidation to a central Southern U.S. warehouse for redistribution to your growing list of customers?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you reading trade and transportation publications, and generally keeping your eyes open for new, innovative, and perhaps cheaper transportation alternatives?

#### **Questions to Ask After the Initial Movement**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Did the customer receive the shipment on time and in good order?
- \_\_\_\_\_ After you have received payment for the goods and have paid all transportation and related charges, did you make a profit on the shipment?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you lost money, have you analyzed what went wrong to see if there is a better shipping arrangement that can be made for the next time?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you used an intermediary for your first few shipments, are you now familiar enough with the territory, or are your sales volumes growing enough for you to deal with carriers directly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ When using a carrier or intermediary on subsequent occasions are you comparing current rate quotes to past ones to make sure you are paying no more than you did the last time?
- \_\_\_\_\_ After using a transportation organization for several shipments, have you re-evaluated other organizations to see if you are still getting the best rates and service?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you have regular movements, and are knowledgeable of your commodity characteristics and service requirements, have you considered negotiating specific commodity rates (as opposed to class rates) with common carriers?