

REMODELING CONTRACTOR STANDARDS GUIDE

CONTRACTOR STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE CHECKLIST

Our 15 Point Checklist Details
All The Qualifications and
Requirements To Demand From
Your Remodeling Contractor

Who's
Supervising
Your
Remodeling
Project?

GET IT IN WRITING!

15 Critical Items That
Absolutely Must Be
Included in Your
Remodeling Contract

A VALUABLE TOOL

to Help You Objectively

**RATE ANY
REMODELING
CONTRACTOR
BEFORE
You Hire Them**

THE
5 **BIGGEST
PROBLEMS**
Homeowners
Have With
Remodeling
Contractors...
How You Can
Avoid Them

Compliments of

BK
BATH & KITCHEN
GALLERY

WELCOME TO BATH & KITCHEN GALLERY



If you need help choosing a remodeling contractor to renovate your kitchen, bath or another room in your home, then I think you'll find this *Remodeling Contractor Standards Guide* to be a great resource.

My name is Joe Ferrantegennaro and I'm the President and owner of Bath & Kitchen Gallery in Tampa.

There are a lot of great remodeling contractors in the Tampa area besides Bath & Kitchen Gallery who would do a quality job on your remodeling project. But I thought you might want to know some of the reasons why our customers choose us.

5 Reasons Why More People Choose Bath & Kitchen Gallery



1 We Design and Build

If you've ever done a remodeling project where you've had to hire two companies, one to create the design and another to handle the construction, then you know what a nightmare it can be to try to make it all work. You won't have that problem with Bath & Kitchen Gallery, because we are a "one-stop-shop" design and build remodeling company.

2 Less Down Time

Most remodeling companies will immediately start the demolition phase of your project even if they haven't taken delivery of all your materials. So if there's a shipping delay you may be without use of your soon-to-be remodeled room for weeks, before they're ready to begin the installation phase. We don't work that way. We will not start demolition until we've received 100% of your materials including cabinets, countertops, tile and fixtures. That means less down time for you and your family.

3 We Work Clean

Remodeling projects always create a lot of dust, yet most construction companies do little to solve this problem. Bath & Kitchen Gallery employs a **Work Clean System** to stop 97% of all dust particles from infiltrating other areas of your home. First we seal off your kitchen or bath from the rest of your house by building a temporary wall with plastic sheeting. We also cover doors, window frames and exhaust vents, so that particles can't travel from room to room. Then we use a HEPA filter air scrubber to pull dust and other pollutants from the air, leaving your home as clean possible.

4 Lead Carpenter Management System

We assign a Lead Carpenter to every remodeling project. He's on the job site all day, every day, and he has no other project to manage but yours. Most other remodeling companies employ a supervisor to manage multiple projects at once, while outsourcing 100% of the job tasks to subcontractors. When no one on site is in charge, mistakes are made and projects are delayed.

5 5 STAR Customer Satisfaction Rating

Since 2007 we've subscribed to **Guild Quality** an independent, customer satisfaction company to solicit feedback from our remodeling customers. During that time **88.4% of our customers gave us a 5 star rating**, while 97% of our customers said that they would recommend us to others. To read our unfiltered customer reviews go to www.guildquality.com.

For More Information Contact Bath & Kitchen Gallery at:
813.933.8000 or at tampakitchenandbath.com.



OUR CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS

Our Customer Bill of Rights sets the standards for local remodeling contractors and lets you know what you can expect from us. ***Bath & Kitchen Gallery recognizes that all our customers have the following rights:***



Customer Service

- **You have a right** to expect your remodeling company to guide you through the many design options, with no sales pressure, so you can make the best possible choice.
- **You have a right** to expect a dedicated, start to finish Lead Carpenter to seamlessly coordinate every phase of your remodeling project.
- **You have a right** to expect complete written estimates, so that there are no surprises and no hidden charges.
- **You have a right** to expect that all work will be completed to your satisfaction.



Professional Conduct

- **You have a right** to be treated in a friendly, courteous and respectful manner.
- **You have a right** to expect that workers will respect your personal property, including bathrooms and parking spaces.
- **You have a right** to expect workers to adhere to a strict code of conduct that includes no smoking, no drinking, no foul language and no horseplay.
- **You have a right** to expect that the remodeling company will “work clean” by sealing off the work area and using negative air pressure to eliminate 97% of remodeling dust.
- **You have a right** to expect that workers will do everything they can to control the noise level during your remodeling project.
- **You have a right** to expect that workers and subcontractors will show up at a reasonable hour and put in a full days work.



Job Standards

- **You have a right** to expect that all workers will have a neat and clean appearance.
- **You have a right** to expect that the remodeling company and our subcontractors will carry both workman’s compensation and general liability insurance.
- **You have a right** to expect that we will control remodeling dust and indoor air pollutants during the messy demolition phase of your project and clean up our mess at the end of the day when the work is done.
- **You have a right** to expect that we will finish your job on time and on budget.

Standards of Excellence Checklist For Remodeling Contractors

Use the following Standards of Excellence Checklist to evaluate any contractor that you may be considering for your remodeling project.

CONTRACTOR STANDARD			
Business License	✓		
State Certified Contractor's License	✓		
Minimum 5 Customer References	✓		
Bank Credit Code Rating of "A"	✓		
Workmen's Compensation and General Liability Insurance	✓		
Complete Written Bid Estimate	✓		
Assign Lead Carpenter and Not Project Supervisor	✓		
Worker Conduct Agreement	✓		
Subcontractor Compliance Agreement	✓		
Resolution Agreement	✓		
Written Warranties	✓		
Security Assurance Program	✓		
Daily Cleanup Roster	✓		
Quality Standards For Remodeling Industry	✓		
A+ Better Business Bureau Rating	✓		

Please note: We've created the *Standards of Excellence for Remodeling Contractors Checklist* as a resource to help you choose the remodeling contractor that's right for you. It is not our intention to disparage other contractors. We know that there are plenty of contractors who are honest, hard-working and competent. This checklist is provided to help you find a qualified contractor and avoid those unqualified contractors who simply can't measure up to these standards.

How Will Your Contractor Measure Up?

The Standards of Excellence Checklist for Remodeling Contractors

(An explanation of all the points on our checklist)

Business License- All businesses in the state of Florida are required to have a current business license on file.

State Certified Contractor's License- This license ensures that a contractor has met all requirements and is licensed to work on any construction project in the Florida. Verify a contractor's license at myfloridalicense.com

Minimum 5 Customer References- Contractors should be able to provide at least five local references.

Credit Code Rating of "A" From Contractor's Bank- Contractors with good credit ratings will provide this information. Avoid contractors with poor credit ratings.

Workmen's Compensation and General Liability Insurance Coverage- If an uninsured contractor gets injured on your job, they could seek compensation from you. Make sure the contractor carries both general liability insurance and workmen's compensation coverage and obtain proof of that coverage, direct from their insurance company.

Complete Written Estimate- To avoid confusion and unexpected charges, the contractor needs to list the material, grade, brand name, color and model numbers for every single item that you plan to purchase, as well as what work needs to be done.

Assign Lead Carpenter and NOT a Project Supervisor To Manage Project- Most contractors use a Project Supervisor to manage the project, but he is managing multiple projects at the same time and is not on the jobsite every day overseeing all the subcontractors that will be working on the project. A Lead carpenter is a skilled carpenter and the jobsite superintendent who is actually on the jobsite EVERY day, coordinating worker schedules and helping to ensure job quality and avoid project delays.

Worker Conduct Agreement- The contractor and all the workers who will be on the jobsite should commit in writing to a strict set of worker conduct and appearance standards.

Subcontractor Compliance Agreement- Most contractors will use sub contractors like plumbers and electricians at some stage during the remodeling process. Make sure the contractor has a method to control the actions of their subcontractors.

Resolution Agreement- This agreement details how you and the contractor will resolve any disputes regarding your remodeling project. Ask to review their version of this important document.

Written Warranties- There should be written warranties for both the products purchased (cabinets, countertops, etc.) and for the remodeling work.

Security Assurance Program- You needn't sacrifice the security of your family or your home during a remodeling project. Ask the contractor to detail the steps he has taken in the past to secure the safety of his customers and their property.

Daily Cleanup Roster- Contractors should have a system in place for cleaning up the worksite on a daily basis. Ask to see a sample copy of their daily cleanup roster.

Quality Standards for the Professional Remodeling Industry- This is a resource that all contractors should use as a guideline for both workmanship and materials. Make sure the contractor includes all relevant specifications from this book into your remodeling contract.

A+ Better Business Bureau Rating- Contact the BBB on line at www.bbb.org to identify the Better Business Bureau in your area. Your local chapter will provide a report of a contractor's standing.



The Biggest Problems People Have With Remodeling Contractors... And How You Can Avoid Them



To help protect homeowners about to embark on a remodeling project, here is our list of the five biggest problems people have with remodeling contractors...and how you can avoid them.

Problem #1: Faulty Workmanship

Many people who call themselves remodeling contractors simply don't have the knowledge or experience to do the job right. They have no systems to prevent poor installations and poor construction, and no subcontractor compliance agreements to guarantee that all the work will be done properly. The truth is that 96% of all contractors are "Mom & Pop" type operations and almost 50% of them go out of business within the first year.

Problem #2: Project Not Completed On Time

Many homeowners are shocked to learn that 82% of all remodeling jobs are not completed on time. When this happens it usually means that workers and subcontractors are arriving late, leaving early or just not showing up at all. Still other remodeling projects will fail to meet scheduling deadlines because there isn't a single worker (like a lead carpenter) who is on your job every day overseeing the work. It's no wonder that almost 33% of all homeowners will need to have their remodeling jobs completed by someone other than the original contractor.

Problem #3: Hidden Charges

An astounding 74% of all remodeling jobs result in the homeowner paying more than the original bid. In fact, most of these homeowners will pay 20% - 30% more than they had expected to pay. The reasons for these extra charges are varied. Although some contractors make legitimate change orders once the project has begun, many will deliberately write estimates that are incomplete or inaccurate to leave "wiggle room" for add-on charges. Still other contractors will underbid jobs simply because they lack the experience to accurately estimate how much the project will actually cost.

Problem #4: Dust From Demolition and Project Mess

Remodeling can be messy work, but most contractors add to the mess by not working clean. They have no system to remove dust during the demolition phase of the remodeling project, no system to ensure that non-work areas remain clean and no daily cleanup schedule to reduce clutter and mess at the end of each workday.

Problem #5: Poor Customer Service

Poor customer service in remodeling and construction is usually the result of poor communication. Often the contractor is not available, does not return phone call and does not inform the customer of important schedule changes.

HOW YOU CAN AVOID ALL THESE PROBLEMS

Now you can avoid the five biggest problems people have with remodeling contractors. Our Standards of Excellence Checklist, which is included in this guide, will help you evaluate any contractor you may be considering. Before you sign a contract or write a check, make sure that your contractor complies with these important standards.

Who's Supervising YOUR Remodeling Project?

If you're thinking about remodeling your kitchen or bathroom a major factor to consider is...

Who will supervise your project?

The project manager is the person in charge of ordering materials, accepting deliveries, coordinating installation schedules and overseeing all the work. More importantly he is often the one person who can determine whether your project will be a complete success or one of the most frustrating experiences of your life.

The type of company you choose will dictate who your project manager will be. Let's take a look at three types of remodeling companies to see what kind of project manager each will offer.

The Big Box Stores

Many remodeling customers don't realize that the nationally-known "Big Box Stores" only SELL kitchens and bathrooms. They don't do the installation nor do they manage your remodeling project for you. These stores typically use different subcontractors to install everything which means that you could have one company installing the cabinets, another installing the countertops, a plumber to handle sink installations and an electrician to handle lighting.

But who will coordinate the scheduling of all of those subcontractors, oversee the installation and assume the role of project supervisor?

If you buy from a big box store then the project supervisor will be YOU!



So if you're thinking about a big box store remodeling purchase, ask yourself these questions:

- **Do I have the time and the expertise** to become my own project manager?
- **Who will schedule delivery** of the cabinets, countertops, and appliances?
- **Can I coordinate all the subcontractors** like plumbers, electricians and installers?
- **Who will help resolve my problems** if unforeseen issues arise?

If you're happy with the quality and the selection of materials offered by the big box stores then you may be able to save a little money on your remodeling project. Only you can decide whether the savings will make up for all the time and effort you'll need to personally invest, just to make your new kitchen or bath a reality.

To read what customers have to say about their remodeling experiences with big box stores or to check out any company you may be considering for your remodeling project, go to www.consumeraffairs.com to learn more.

Most Remodeling Contractors

Whether you choose a design and build remodeling contractor or a design firm that subcontracts the “build” part of your project to a remodeling contractor, almost all of these companies will assign someone to supervise the project for you.

Unfortunately it’s a common practice in the remodeling industry for a company to ask their supervisors to manage multiple projects at the same time. And if this supervisor is managing multiple projects at once from an off-site location it means that he can’t possibly be on YOUR job site all the time.

This is referred to as the “Superintendent Model” and the reason most remodeling contractors use this model is because they began their careers as new home builders. The economics of the new home construction industry dictates that a superintendent must oversee multiple projects at the same time in order for these companies to meet their profit margins.

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) recommends a much different approach to project management for remodeling projects (see below). But since most remodeling company owners are former new construction contractors, they are more comfortable using the superintendent model.

What does this mean for you and your remodeling project? It means if you choose one of

these companies that many different workers and subcontractors will be coming and going from your home, but there usually won’t be an on-site supervisor to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

Despite the increased risk of project errors the finished design completed by a remodeling contractor that uses the superintendent model MAY end up looking just as good as a design by a contractor who subscribes to the project management model recommended by NARI. However the superintendent model often means project delays and added stress for the homeowner.



Contractors Who Use The Lead Carpenter System



Bath & Kitchen Gallery uses a Lead Carpenter Management System for all our remodeling projects.

This project management system is endorsed by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, because it has many key advantages over the superintendent model used by most other contractors.

With the Lead Carpenter Management System there is a person who is both a carpenter and a jobsite superintendent. This lead carpenter is on the jobsite all day, every day until your project is complete. He does all the carpentry work, but his primary function is to manage all the workers and schedule installations, so that your remodeling project is completed on time and to your exact specifications.

During the process he will also handle all those tasks that may “fall between the cracks” when there is no on-site supervisor, such as laying down dust protection, materials storage, daily cleanup of the jobsite and ensuring that your home is locked at the end of the day.

Bath & Kitchen Gallery not only uses a Lead Carpenter on all our remodeling projects we also employ all our own workers including plumbers, electricians and drywall installers. (We only use subcontractors for countertop fabrication and bathroom glass enclosures.)

Of course Bath & Kitchen Gallery is not the only Tampa-area remodeling company that uses a Lead Carpenter Management System. But if you want the best chance for a successful design project, make sure that the remodeling contractor you choose features the Lead Carpenter Management System.

15 Critical Items That Absolutely Must Be Included In Your Remodeling Contract



We've all heard remodeling horror stories from homeowners who've had bad experiences with contractors. But the sad truth is that many of these problems could have been avoided if the homeowner knew what to look for and look out for in their remodeling contract.

In order to protect yourself you need to make sure that your contractor puts everything in writing. Don't settle for a one-page document that allows for add-on charges or (worse yet) for a verbal agreement and a handshake. A good contract will clearly detail every aspect of the remodeling job and should be fair to both parties.

Here are 15 critical items your remodeling contract should include:

1. Contact Information

The contractor should list his name, address and telephone number.

2. Location Address

The contract should also include your address. If the work is to be completed on a home that has not yet been built, be sure to include the lot number.

3. Right of Recession

You have the right to cancel the contract within three business days with no penalty, as long as it has not been signed at the contractor's place of business. By law, no work can begin until those three days are up.

4. Project Description

This is usually a simple paragraph that gives you a thorough description of the project.

5. Detailed Plans

Renderings by your architect or designer giving a detailed layout of all equipment, cabinets, countertops and fixtures. It should be signed by you.

6. Detailed Description of Materials

State exact specifications on all cabinets, countertops and fixtures, including the make and model numbers as appropriate. Also, make sure it includes a phrase like, “new materials unless otherwise specified.” so that the contractor cannot substitute used materials.

7. Building Permits

It should be stated in the contract that the contractor is responsible for getting all required building permits. (Note: Never sign the building permits yourself or else you will be held responsible if there is a problem.)

8. Licenses & Insurance

Include the contractor’s license number as well as a statement of proof that he has both workmen’s compensation and general liability insurance coverage.

9. Lien Protection

The contractor should include language that states the homeowner will not be held responsible if the subcontractors are not paid.

10. Your Work Contributions

If you, the homeowner, are performing any of the work, then that should be detailed in writing as well.

11. Time of Performance

This is a job completion timeframe that requires a specific start date and a date by which all work will be completed. Penalties and/or bonuses could also be added for late/early completion of the work.

12. Personal Property Protection

If the contractor or one of his subcontractors damages your personal property, there should be something in writing that details how you will be compensated for the loss.

13. Cleanup Schedule

Insist upon a daily cleanup of the project site and a detailed description of what cleanup entails when the project has been completed.

14. Warranties

Warranties are usually for a minimum of 1 year for all materials and workmanship, although some manufacturer warranties provide extended coverage. Make sure your contract includes the name and address of all companies that will honor the warranties.

15. Dispute Resolution

Many contracts are now including clauses that detail how disputes will be resolved. Often the dispute is handled by a mutually agreed upon mediator.

Price and Payment Schedules

Your contract should include the total price of the remodeling project, as well as the payment schedule and cancellation fee. Here are some additional things to consider:

- Don’t pay more than half of the total bill before the project has started.
- Typically there is a minimum of three installments. The first payment is due before the work has begun. The second payment is usually due at some agreed upon milestone, when a significant portion of the project has been completed. The final payment is due upon completion of the project.
- Tie payments to milestones, not to time periods
- Never give the contractor a final check until all work has been completed to your satisfaction. Otherwise you’ll lose all your leverage.

Customer Testimonials

The following testimonials are unfiltered and unaltered comments from www.guildquality.com



88.4% of our customers gave us a **5 Star Rating** and **97%** said they would **recommend us to others**

"Very professional, great work, kept within agreed upon budget."



The company and its contractors were simply awesome. We could not have been more pleased. I highly recommend them.

-Don P.



I was very pleased with the professional services they provided. They were on time and worked efficiently. I would recommend them to anyone.

-G.F.



It was a complicated job and we did need to change course a couple of times, and it was all done very professionally and to my complete satisfaction."

"The entire experience was very good, from the time that Joe came over and went through the job with us until completion. They were very personable, and came out promptly every day. There were no frustrating moments for us.

-Ted R.



My kitchen and bath look beautiful!

-Lori A.



Very happy with the work the Bath and Kitchen Gallery completed on my 2 bathrooms. Great quality within the budget we discussed. I have no hesitation recommending them to others.

-Tim M.



I was most satisfied with everything. They started the job when they said they would. They completed it in the timeframe. They were punctual and did a great job completing the project.

We have lived in Florida for twenty years and have never received greater service from a company here. We chose Bath and Kitchen Gallery in Tampa after a Better Business and Angie's List search and also because it was a locally owned brick and mortar store. What a great decision. From our initial visit to the store where we met with Sandy we felt like we had chosen well. Joe came to the house and did his estimate and from there on everything went well. We only had a slight glitch and that was due to outside issues with the quartz counters. We will sing the praises of Bath and Kitchen Gallery to all who will listen. Extra thanks to Doris, Mike and Ed. You all were great!

-George and Kate M.

For More Information Contact Bath & Kitchen Gallery at: 813.933.8000 or at tampakitchenandbath.com