

What You Should Look for in a Manufacturing Partner



Before selecting or evaluating a manufacturing partner, consider the following:

The Basics

- ☐ Can they make the part?
- ☐ Do they have the required equipment and processes?
- ☐ Do they have the certifications you need?
- ☐ Do they have sufficient capacity?

Communication

- ☐ Do they ask questions during quoting?
- ☐ Do they understand your priorities and challenges?
- ☐ Are they honest about what they can and cannot do?
- ☐ Do they communicate clearly when problems or dates change?

Engineering Expertise

- ☐ Can they provide engineering support?
- ☐ Do they identify manufacturability concerns?
- ☐ Can they support design changes and process improvements?

Quality

- ☐ Do they have strong revision control and traceability?
- ☐ Do they perform first-article and in-process inspections?
- ☐ Can they provide dimensional reports?
- ☐ Do they have appropriate inspection equipment?
- ☐ Do they have a defined process for nonconformances and RMAs?
- ☐ Do they track on-time delivery and other performance metrics

Supply Chain

- ☐ Do they have reliable outside processing partners?
- ☐ Can they manage material and process traceability?
- ☐ Can they coordinate multiple suppliers and processes?

Long-Term Fit

- ☐ Do they invest in employee training?
- ☐ Are they investing in equipment, automation, and software?
- ☐ Are they actively improving their processes?
- ☐ Do they have the capacity and capabilities to grow with you?