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Twelve questions for any buyer

Ask every buyer the same twelve and compare the answers in writing. Ours are filled in.

1. Who actually decides whether this deal happens?
The person you're talking to. Any lender or co-investor the deal needs is named early, in writing.

2. How is the purchase funded, and what part is conditional?
In the written offer: our equity, outside equity, bank debt, sometimes a note you carry — each marked committed or conditional.

3. What could change the price after the LOI?
Named in advance: numbers that don't tie to the bank, a customer the business can't lose leaving, something material we weren't told. Ordinary diligence can't.

4. When do you plan to sell it again?
We don't. No fund, no resale date.

5. What happens to the team?
We buy the business because it works; the people are most of why. No layoff plan, and we work out with you when and how they're told.

6. What happens to the name?
If it carries customer trust, it stays.

7. What changes on Monday?
An owner who reads the numbers, a bank that returns calls, capital for the truck or the hire. The business itself doesn't.

8. Will you contact my customers, employees or competitors?
Not without your permission.

9. How long will this take, and when will I know?
The timeline is set before you commit, and you hear directly if anything moves it.

10. Will I be asked for exclusivity, and when?
Only after you have a written offer you like, and only for the time it takes to close.

11. What's my role after, and who decides it?
You do: stay, ease out, or leave. Written down before close.

12. Who can I talk to who's dealt with you?
We'll put you in touch with people who've dealt with us.