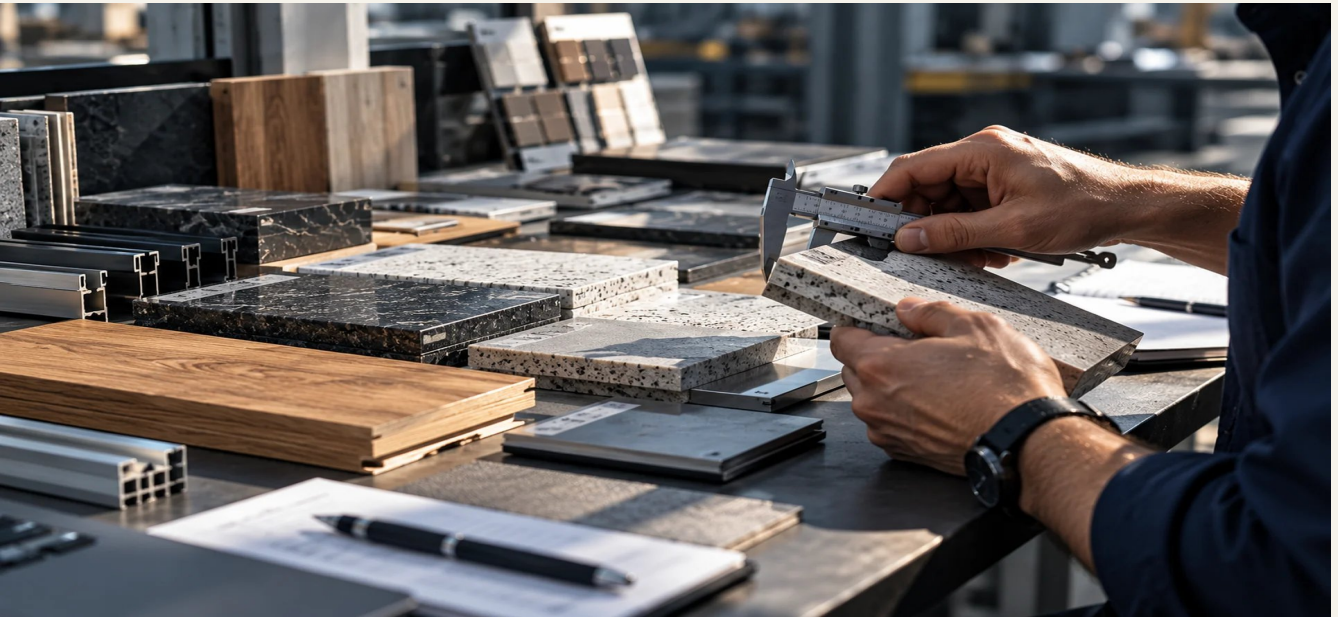


Before you choose the lower quote.

A practical field guide for buyers comparing suppliers, reviewing a price increase or testing an alternative source.



Generated editorial image; not a client project.

Compare the commitment, as well as the price.

A quotation is a commercial position, not a complete purchasing outcome. This guide helps you make two offers comparable, identify extra costs and decide what still needs checking before award.

What this guide gives you

An RFQ preparation checklist, a worked quotation comparison, a qualification review and a reusable worksheet. The worked scenario is fictional and demonstrates the review method; it is not a client case or a savings claim.

The core question

What would we need to commit, pay and verify to make each option workable for this purchase?

Give suppliers the same requirement.

A comparable quotation begins with a clear RFQ. Ask each supplier to respond to the same product, quantity, delivery destination and commercial questions.

In the RFQ	What the supplier should confirm
Product or component	Specification / drawing revision, material, finish, tolerances and any acceptable alternatives.
Quantity and frequency	The quantity for this order, expected replenishment and price breaks quoted separately.
Delivery	Destination, requested delivery date, Incoterm and named place, packaging and freight responsibility.
Commercial terms	Currency, quote validity, MOQ, payment milestones, tooling and setup charges.
Qualification	Samples, test reports, production capability and the documents needed for the application.

Keep exceptions visible

Ask the supplier to state exclusions and deviations. A missing freight charge is unknown, not zero. A general capability claim does not establish that the supplier can meet your specification or date.

Keep a quotation register

Record the supplier, quote reference, issue date, revision and source document. Retain the original quotation beside any normalized comparison.

A lower unit price. A larger order.

Fictional worked scenario: a buyer needs 1,000 units. Both quotes are in the same currency and on the same delivery basis. Freight and qualification costs have not yet been confirmed.

Quotation item	Current source	Alternative source
Quoted unit price	10 currency units	9 currency units
Quoted quantity / MOQ	1,000 units	5,000 units
Quoted goods commitment	10,000 currency units	45,000 currency units
Payment	30 days after delivery	30% advance; balance before dispatch
Qualification	Existing source; current acceptance still to be checked	Samples and acceptance checks outstanding
Freight / switching cost	Not confirmed for this order	Not confirmed for this order

What the comparison shows

The alternative unit price is lower, but it is quoted for a different quantity and requires a larger cash and inventory commitment. The two goods commitments are not a like-for-like savings calculation.

Recommended next check

Request an alternative quote for the actual 1,000-unit requirement, or compare both suppliers at a genuinely required common volume. Confirm freight, payment, qualification and the cost of excess stock before recommending a change.

No purchase recommendation can be made from these fictional quotations. The example shows why quantity and terms belong beside price.

Record what still needs proving.

A short review should connect each commercially important gap to a specific action. Research can identify the next check; it cannot guarantee supplier performance.

Question	Evidence to request	Next action
Can the product meet the specification?	Product-specific documents, sample and test results where required.	Agree acceptance criteria and test the relevant sample.
Can the supplier deliver this order?	A dated production-slot and delivery confirmation for the actual product and volume.	Resolve capacity and schedule uncertainty before award.
Are the terms comparable?	Revised quotation with named delivery basis, currency, volume, validity and exclusions.	Normalize the quote and retain the original.
Is the source qualified for this application?	Required product and supplier documentation; checks proportionate to the purchase.	Record unresolved requirements and who will clear them.

Separate fact, assumption and gap

Label supplier-stated information as supplier-stated. Identify which documents were reviewed, their dates and what they establish. Do not turn an absent cost or document into a positive conclusion.

Write the recommendation with conditions

Proceed to the next check, renegotiate the current position, qualify an alternative or retain the incumbent. State the reason, the trade-off and the conditions that must be satisfied.

Use this on your next quotation.

A reusable review worksheet. Enter values from actual supplier quotations; leave unknowns blank and record the check needed to resolve them.

Comparison basis	Your notes
Product / specification / revision	
Required quantity / destination / timing	
Currency / delivery basis / quote references	
Current and alternative unit prices	
Additional freight / switching / qualification	
MOQ / payment / lead-time differences	
Evidence gaps / next check / owner	

A limited calculation aid

Potential order cost reduction = (current unit price - alternative unit price) x common order quantity - additional freight - qualification / switching cost. Use matched quotations and one currency. The online tool excludes tax, duties, financing, inventory carrying cost and any cost not entered.

What a scoped Merillgrove review can include

An agreed quotation register, normalized commercial comparison, qualification gaps and recommended next steps. Deliverables and evidence depth are agreed before work starts. Merillgrove is buyer-paid and independent, with no supplier commissions.

Bring the requirement, quotes, volume, destination and timing.

Discuss procurement support: merillgrove.com/contact

Use the guide and calculation aid: merillgrove.com/resources