

***CONSTRUCTION RISK CHECKLIST > Pre-construction > Quote/Estimate  
Checked for Accuracy***

**A Bad Quote Can Cost More Than a Bad Job**

Most builders understand the importance of producing a competitive quote. What is often overlooked is the importance of producing an accurate one.

A mistake in a quote or estimate can have consequences that last for months. Underpricing a project can destroy profitability, create cashflow pressure and lead to disputes when unexpected costs arise. Overpricing can mean losing work to competitors. Either way, inaccurate pricing creates unnecessary risk.

The good news is that many quoting errors can be prevented through a simple review process before the quote is presented to the client.

**Quote Accuracy Checklist**

Before issuing a quote or estimate, consider the following checks:

1. **Review the plans, specifications and scope of work for missing items.**
2. **Check all measurements and quantities have been calculated correctly.**
3. **Confirm current material and supplier pricing.**
4. **Verify subcontractor pricing and availability.**
5. **Check labour allowances against actual historical production rates.**
6. **Review all Prime Cost Items and Provisional Sums for reasonableness.**
7. **Identify assumptions, exclusions and qualifications.**
8. **Have another person independently review the quote.**
9. **Use AI tools to identify omissions, inconsistencies or potential risks.**
10. **Consider professional quantity surveying for larger or more complex projects.**
11. **Compare the estimate against previous similar projects.**
12. **Allow for contingency where appropriate.**

One of the most effective ways to improve quote accuracy is to compare the project against similar jobs completed in the past. If a renovation is significantly cheaper, faster or more profitable on paper than comparable projects, there is usually a reason worth investigating.

A second set of eyes can also be invaluable. Many pricing errors are simple omissions that become obvious to someone reviewing the quote for the first time. A business partner, estimator, project manager or experienced colleague may identify issues that the original estimator overlooked after spending hours immersed in the details.

Artificial Intelligence can also be a useful review tool. Builders can upload their scope of work, estimate and assumptions into AI software and ask it to identify missing trades, likely variations, procurement risks, sequencing issues or inconsistencies. While AI should never replace professional judgement, it can act as an additional quality control step and help identify potential blind spots.

For larger renovations, architectural homes or complex projects, engaging a professional quantity surveyor can provide significant value. An independent review may identify omissions, incorrect quantities or unrealistic allowances before they become expensive mistakes.

It is also important to carefully review Prime Cost Items and Provisional Sums. These allowances are often a major source of disputes because clients assume they represent fixed prices when they may only be estimates. Ensuring these allowances are realistic and clearly explained can reduce misunderstandings later.

Finally, take the time to review assumptions and exclusions. Many builders know what they intended to include, but the client only sees what is written in the quote. If something is excluded, state it clearly.

The most profitable builders are not necessarily the cheapest or the busiest. They are often the builders who consistently produce accurate, well-considered quotes that reflect the true cost and risk of the project.

A few extra hours spent reviewing a quote before it is issued can save months of stress, lost profit and difficult conversations later.