

THE ROOFING CONSULTANT

By

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Before you retain a "Roofing Consultant", it may be germane to your interest to know who and what you are dealing with.

Webster defines a consultant as "one who gives professional advice or services". Another source describes consultants as "entrepreneurs in the knowledge field" and "someone who has expertise in a specific areas and offers unbiased opinions and advice for a fee".

In Canada, anyone can call themselves a "roofing consultant", just as in many jurisdictions, anyone can call themselves a roofing contractor when they have absolutely no credentials or trade experience. A pickup and a ladder may be all that's needed to call yourself a roofer.

So too some "roofing consultants"! In fact many roofing contractors call themselves roofing consultants and many even have separate yellow pages advertisements in that regard. It seems to me that the person that's trying to sell a roof to a customer is in a bit of a conflict of interest if he is also purporting to give "free consultations" or advice! I suggest you may pay for what you get!

Professional or "real" Roof Consultants perform evaluations of existing roofs, prepare professional construction documents, perform forensic investigations, serve as expert witnesses and plan and monitor roof design solutions. They work exclusively for the benefit of their client. They have enough money in their quoted fees to do the proper and professional job the client requires.

The Consultants credentials should include credible roofing industry experience and knowledge, independence from any one supplier or manufacturer and no direct links with any contractors. Ideally, the consultant has some professional education and experience, carries appropriate insurance to cover the work he or she performs and has wide industry affiliations with which to work.

RCI, Incorporated - The Institute of Roofing, Waterproofing, and Building Envelope Professionals, is an association of roof consulting professionals that operates in both Canada and the United States. RCI maintains a certification program designed to distinguish consultants with the highest standards of education, experience and ethics. All professional members operate without conflict of interest and are not connected with manufacturers or installers of products. They strive to be unbiased and are governed by an established code of ethics. Only qualified RCI members can use the titles RRC (Registered Roof Consultant) or RRO (Registered Roof Observer). Both titles require the applicants to submit to a review of education credentials, evidence of at least 4 years relevant experience, and references providing proof of good character. Both titles require the passing of a comprehensive written examination

It behooves the Client to accurately establish the Consultant's credentials and carefully research his references and philosophy. As always, **the lowest price is not the law!** The "real" or Professional Consultant has only one thing to offer and that is his legitimate, unbiased expertise. He must use that expertise judiciously and honestly in the best interests of the Client, without undue influence of parties outside the Client/Consultant relationship.

The Consultant provides the Client with the expertise that the Client does not have or cannot supply in house.