Ten Important Questions to ask before you hire someone to provide your IT & Computer Support

How responsive are you to my ongoing IT requirements?
We understand that having your systems up and running are important to you. Some systems like your server need to be available and in the event of failure, you want it up and productive in the shortest possible time. We can provide you with a response time that ensures your required levels of "up time".

Do you have a particular specialty or focus?
If you are running Windows Server, Exchange, or Small Business Server your IT service provider has a level of expertise to support you without guessing. Ensuring that your server is well protected and up to date is a necessary requirement.

How do you proactively communicate your findings about my environment?
You care about the status of your technology investment – it is an important productivity tool. Knowing that your systems are reliable and protected minimizes the risk of failure and downtime. Regular reporting provides an added level of comfort in a sometimes stressful business environment.

How flexible are you with your service offerings?
Like most business people, you would want the best solution for your technology needs. Not all equipment requires the same level of response time. Sometimes a spare system could be more economical that an emergency call.

How do you provide your support and services?
Not every problem requires and on-site call. Connecting remotely to your system to assess an issue may time you both time and expense – this is often equated to as the same thing.

How long have you been in business (is this your "full-time" job)?
There are many "geeks" around who may or may not have the expertise to solve your IT problems quickly and efficiently and with minimal risk to your business. Unfortunately, they are few and far between. It is important to entrust your IT Support to "professional" IT support who have been in business for a number of years and have the experience to continue to run an efficient and profitable business in order to continue the high levels of support you would expect.

How do you keep current in this ever-changing world of technology?
The Internet and the World Wide Web are rich sources of technology information and sorting through what is relevant comes from experience. Webinars are also effective sources of information exchange. On-line user groups and feeds provide more specific and related information.

How will you deliver the services or recommendations your provide my company/business?
Understanding client needs is an extremely strong requirement. Real-world involvement in business processes and how IT may be used as "tools" to solve business process problems. IT as "tools" not "toys" needs to be a business philosophy shared by all to ensure successful results

What type of experience do you have dealing with similar environments to mine?
Focusing on small business needs and the variety of demands placed on owners and operations are different than those in mid and enterprise clients. There are sometimes pressing and urgent requirements that may not be present in larger entities. Ensure that your provider understands this

How many people work in your company?
Small businesses need to effectively manage their staff. Mostly they cannot afford the luxury of an abundance of full-time staff. Forging alliances with similar business operators in a manner that leverages their expertise and resources as needed make an affordable, yet effective method of having the answers to the technology questions as and when they are required.