



The Walk-Away Checklist

Buying cyber help you can't judge? Five signals that should end the conversation.

If a proposal shows any of these, you don't need to understand the technical detail — you already have your answer.

1. **You can't tell what you'll have at the end.** It sells an outcome ('peace of mind') but never names a deliverable. A good engagement produces a thing: a report, a configured control, a documented plan.
2. **Fear is doing the selling.** It leads with what could happen to you, not what they'll do for you. Statistics about ransomware are not a scope of work.
3. **They won't name the tools.** 'Our proprietary platform' is usually commodity software with their logo on it. You're entitled to know what you're paying for.
4. **There are no numbers — only ticks.** 'MFA: enabled.' On what? For whom? A finding without a coverage rate is decoration.
5. **They can't tell you how to leave.** If exiting means losing access to your own configuration and data, that's a hostage situation, not a service.

Five questions is all it takes to filter most of the bad ones. Keep this list somewhere you'll find it.