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Supplier Comparison Framework - 9-Check Audit Workbook

A printable, field-ready workbook for scoring 3-8 suppliers before every RFQ: the 8 comparison dimensions, 3 default weight models, 7 veto items, a 7-step pre-RFQ SOP, a blank weighted scorecard, and the 6 RFQ handoff fields.

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Version 1.0 · Last updated: September 22, 2026

DISCLAIMER

This workbook is a field tool drawn from LeelineGroup's recent factory audits and floor practice. It is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for licensed third-party inspection, legal counsel, or customs advice. We accept no kickbacks and no paid placements. Verify every certificate and audit report against the issuing body before you award business.

1. Compare 8 Dimensions, Not 30

Compare only these dimensions - a 30-point matrix hides the eight checks that actually stop a bad supplier. Score one evidence rule per row: a missing document stops the supplier, and price stays last until the landed-cost model confirms margin.

Dimension	What to check	Proof required	Passing score
Capacity and lead time	Open lines and peak-season slots	Weekly production schedule with dated capacity	PO ships inside the dock date window
Engineering and sampling	Tooling ownership and sample speed	Signed DFM report or CAD revision log	First article approved within 14 days; tooling transferable
Quality system	In-line and pre-shipment controls	Timestamped AQL 1.5 / 2.5 reports	Defect rate 1.5% or less on the last three runs
Materials and process	Approved BOM and sub-tier traceability	Signed BOM with supplier names	No unapproved substitutes in the last audit
Compliance and ESG	Certificates, labor and environmental status	Current BSCI and ISO 9001 reports	Audits within 18 months; no open critical findings
Packaging and logistics	Carton strength, labels and pallet patterns	Drop-test video and FNSKU / carton sign-off	No packaging chargebacks in 12 months
Commercial terms	Payment and liability split	Executed payment-terms sheet	Net-30 or 30/70; NNN signed and enforceable
Price	Landed or in-store cost	FOB + freight + duty + prep model	Hits target landed COGS; never the lowest FOB

2. Set Weights with 3 Default Models

Each column sums to 100. A veto item voids the total score - missing BSCI is a zero, not a deduction. Procurement, Quality and Compliance sign the weights together; nobody edits them later in a spreadsheet.

Dimension	Seasonal Retail	Hospitality	Amazon / FBA
Capacity & lead time	25	10	20
Engineering & sampling	10	10	10
Quality system	20	30	15
Materials & process	10	20	5
Compliance & ESG	10	15	15
Packaging & logistics	15	5	25
Commercial terms	5	5	5
Price	5	5	5

If raw-material price risk jumps more than 10% quarter over quarter, move 5 points from capacity to materials. The veto column never moves.

3. Veto Items Beat Weighted Scores

One rule overlays the weighted scores: a veto item voids the total. Require all seven evidence files before you score anything. One veto means zero - no averaging.

- [ ] 1. Current original audit report
  Evidence: Dated within 18 months, and the original - not a forwarded copy or cover page.
- [ ] 2. Declared subcontracting
  Evidence: Floor register matches the tier-2 list; no undeclared outsourced processes.
- [ ] 3. Sample-to-bulk material match
  Evidence: Signed BOM plus the first-bulk swatch kept against the approved sample.
- [ ] 4. Acceptance of third-party inspection
  Evidence: Unconditional inspector access before PO, with no notice period and no escort control.
- [ ] 5. Tooling ownership in contract
  Evidence: Transferable title and custody of molds, dies and fixtures in writing.
- [ ] 6. Batch test data
  Evidence: Timestamped tensile or safety report per lot, tied to the production run.
- [ ] 7. Production-slot proof
  Evidence: Dated capacity schedule sitting behind the quoted lead time.

4. The 7-Step Pre-RFQ SOP

Most teams send RFQs too early. Run this seven-step gate before any quote goes out, and make Procurement, Quality and Compliance sign every elimination record - the written reasons are what prove the comparison was real.

- [ ] 1. Build the long list of 8-12 suppliers.
  Evidence: Match by region, category and capacity. Send every supplier the same pack: RFQ cover sheet, CAD or BOM, quality plan (ISO 9001) and compliance checklist. Deadline 7-10 days, no extensions.

- [ ] 2. Desk-score all eight dimensions, independently.
  Evidence: Quality and Compliance score separately against the evidence rules - no verbal promises, no "TBC".

- [ ] 3. Reconcile any score gap larger than 1 point.
  Evidence: Reconcile against the evidence file. Where there is no evidence, the higher score drops.

- [ ] 4. Assign A, B or C risk tiers.
  Evidence: A means low risk; C means disqualified. Compliance owns the tier, not Procurement.

- [ ] 5. Sample and audit the A-tier only.
  Evidence: Do not spend audit days on C-tier names. Buy engineering samples before any tooling commitment.

- [ ] 6. Add landed cost before any price comparison.
  Evidence: Freight, duty, prep and payment terms in one model. FOB is never the decision number.

- [ ] 7. Publish one primary and one backup supplier.
  Evidence: Write a reason for every elimination; Procurement, Quality and Compliance sign the record.

5. Weighted Scorecard & Risk Matrix

Print this page and score each shortlisted supplier on the floor. The shaded row is a worked example; overwrite it with your own suppliers. Score every dimension, then add landed cost before you touch price.

Part A - Dimension scores (1 unverified to 5 audited and current)

Supplier	Cap	Eng	QA	Mat	Comp	Pkg	Comm	Price	Weighted total
Ningbo Jinli	4	4	5	4	5	4	3	3	84

Part B - Entity, veto, landed cost and decision

Supplier	Legal entity	Address	In-house/ Outsourced	Veto Y/N	Landed cost	Decision	Reviewer sign-off
Ningbo Jinli	Ningbo Jinli Trading Co., Ltd.	88 Jintang Rd, Ningbo	In-house	N	$12.40/unit	Primary	Procurement VP, 3/2

Score each dimension 1 (unverified) to 5 (audited and current), following amfori BSCI standards. Red-flag items get a 5x5 severity and likelihood risk score per ISO 31000 guidance. A veto voids the total - the veto column always stays, even when you edit the weights. Update the weights quarterly from OTIF and RMA data.

6. 5 Failures That Break Shortlists

Five failures create expensive sourcing mistakes. Each one is cheap to prevent if you fix it before the RFQ rather than after the PO.

1. Requesting quotes before the framework.

   Fix: Lock objectives and vetoes first. Collect no price until the one-line win is written on the RFQ cover sheet.

2. Treating brand fame as factory capability.

   Fix: Inspect the actual production line and the certificates, not the logo. Open capacity and clean audits are what count.

3. Scoring trading companies and factories on identical weights.

   Fix: Split the scorecards for direct and indirect sources - intermediaries hide tier-2 risk.

4. Auditing only the finishing site.

   Fix: Verify tier-2 process control and traceability. Defects start upstream in fabric, PCBs or raw materials.

5. Reusing a scorecard for years without OTIF or RMA review.

   Fix: Update the weights quarterly from OTIF and RMA data; old weights ignore late deliveries and returns.

7. 6 RFQ Fields + Contract Triggers

The framework does not award business - it controls who receives the RFQ. Copy these six fields into your RFQ language and define each one with the evidence rules above. Never write "standard".

- [ ] 1. Material grade
  Evidence: Exact composition, denier, weight or grade with a substitution ban - never write "standard" or "good quality".
- [ ] 2. AQL
  Evidence: The inspection plan (for example AQL 1.5 critical / 2.5 major) and the gate it applies to: in-line, pre-shipment or batch.
- [ ] 3. Inspection rights
  Evidence: Unconditional third-party access before and during production, plus the right to reject against the written plan.
- [ ] 4. Tooling ownership
  Evidence: Transferable title and custody of molds, dies and fixtures, with the hand-over condition stated.
- [ ] 5. ESG compliance file
  Evidence: Current BSCI and ISO 9001 reports showing report date, factory address, auditor name and CAP closure.
- [ ] 6. Packaging specs
  Evidence: Master carton size, weight and marking, FNSKU labels, polybag and suffocation warnings, pallet pattern.

Turn Veto Items into Breach Triggers

Move the key veto items into the contract as breach triggers. Any one of these fires immediate termination rights - no weighted score overrides a breach.

• Missing or expired BSCI / ISO 9001 documentation

• Hidden or undeclared subcontracting

• Unapproved material substitution against the signed BOM

• Sample-to-bulk material drift

• Refusal of third-party inspection access

8. Sources & Official Verification Programs

Verify every registration, certificate and audit claim against the issuing body - never against a forwarded PDF or a cover page.

• amfori BSCI - social compliance audit program

The audit program behind the BSCI reports used as compliance evidence in this framework. Verify an audit date and CAP status directly. (https://www.amfori.org/amfori-bsci/)

• ISO 19011 - Guidelines for auditing management systems

The audit-guideline standard behind the gate-check logic in the veto section. (https://www.iso.org/standard/70017.html)

• ISO 9001 - Quality management systems

The quality-management standard named in the document pack and in the Quality system dimension. (https://www.iso.org/iso-9001-quality-management.html)

• ISO 2859-1 - Sampling procedures for inspection by attributes

The AQL sampling standard used at the in-line, pre-shipment and batch-test gates. (https://www.iso.org/standard/1141.html)

• ISO 31000 - Risk management guidelines

The risk-management guidance behind the 5x5 severity-and-likelihood scoring in the risk matrix. (https://www.iso.org/iso-31000-risk-management.html)

• GSXT / NECIPS - official Chinese company registry

Confirm the legal entity name, Unified Social Credit Code, registered address and business scope. (https://www.gsxt.gov.cn/)

• IAF CertSearch - global certificate database

Verify that a management-system certificate is active, in scope and issued by an accredited body. (https://www.iafcertsearch.org/)

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Want This Scorecard Run on Your Next Shortlist?

Use this workbook to score every supplier yourself, then talk to a sourcing team that runs the same gate on the floor: legal-entity cross-checks, current BSCI and ISO 9001 files, AQL evidence at every gate, and a 3-8 factory shortlist cut down to one primary and one backup. Free, transparent quote.

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