

EXPERT
EYE

BY ANNE-LOUISE WHITE
Senior Association Manager
Stratum



On the lookout for a good OA manager

Choosing an Owners Association (OA) Manager who is the right fit for your tower is an important task. The OA manager should be professionally qualified, have relevant experience, be an effective communicator and should have a firm understanding of the Strata Law.

With freehold property, owners appoint their OA manager during their annual general assembly. It is best practice to obtain quotations from three owners' association management companies just as you would with any other supplier. The OA managers may be asked to give a presentation at the meeting and the board members may make a recommendation based on previous interviews with the OA managers. A vote from all owners is taken and the decision is ideally based on the quality of service, price and experience.

When selecting your OA manager, owners should keep in mind ERPC (experience, relationships, price and communication).

A good manager should possess the requisite experience to handle all types of buildings. This will enable them to deal with all sorts of situations so nothing should come as a surprise. This is where a good manager is invaluable and can save the community time and money from not having to reinvent the wheel time and time again.

Having a good relationship with your OA manager is critical for the successful running of your building. The board and the OA manager need to work together and not adopt a 'them and us' mentality. Both the OA manager and the board need to be open, honest and respectful of each other.

The old adage 'you generally get what you pay for' applies to OA managers too. Be wary when an OA management company offers a very low price, as they probably cannot offer a full service. If they are offering a price that's too good to be true, they may not be able to survive commercially.

The last but by no means least factor is good communication. Lines of communication must always remain open. The level of communication between the board, the OA manager and the owners must be decided at the start of the year in order to ensure all parties are in agreement.