

B Horry County BUSINESS JOURNAL

Local service

Luther here. Eddie's off pod-blog-cast reviewing something or another, so I'm in charge this week.

I ran across a situation recently that demonstrates that bigger is better "ain't necessarily so." My home needed new windows and being the value buyer that I am — OK, cheap — I got several bids. By several, I mean, like 15.

The winner was a big national franchise. The salesman came to the house, measured the windows, noted some repairs that would be required to make the installation up to code and wrote out the quote.

He was about 20 percent lower than any of the other prices I received. He said that it would take six weeks to get the windows. I gave him a 50 percent down payment and gave Clydette the news.

Meanwhile, our project house had progressed to the point of being ready for new windows.

I called several contractors, including the big guys doing my home. It was suggested to me that I also call Mike Barnaby of Barnaby and Sons.

His bid matched the big guys and he could install the windows in three weeks and didn't charge extra for the small amount of extra carpentry work required. As to the windows, they came from the same factory as the big guys, just without the fancy name.

Again, I gave a 50 percent deposit and



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Mike said, "Thank you."

Three weeks later, the windows for the project house arrived. It took the installer a day and a half to install the windows — which look marvelous — and he even taught me a few tricks about trim work. I was very happy.

Three weeks after this I called the big window outfit to ask about the windows for my humble abode.

They weren't in yet and a crew wouldn't be available for another

week and a half. I threatened to make the lady on the phone explain this to Clydette and she said she would see what she could do.

A week later, they had the windows and managed to free up a couple of their installers.

They arrived and started unpacking. After looking the job over, one of the men knocked on the door and informed me that they were two windows short.

We compared work orders and sure enough, my home had grown two windows between me placing my order and the order arriving.

Not really, the salesman had written

the wrong number down.

At this point, I have to admit that I share in the blame. I should have verified that he correctly counted the windows. He's the professional, but I should have checked behind him.

Anyway, the installer called the boss at the big window place and put me on the phone with him.

His demeanor amazed me.

"It's not my fault," he said aggressively. "The salesman made the mistake and the contract only calls for 10 windows."

I was too bewildered by his attitude to even get mad. I simply told him that I would abide by the "contract".

I walked inside and called Mike and asked him how much he could get the windows for and how long it would take. His price per window was actually slightly less and he could have them in three weeks. I placed the order.

Later that afternoon when the salesman showed up, he started telling me how long the extra windows would take when I told him not to worry about it. He was taken aback. Good.

Now, was there some underhandedness involved? I hope not. But the difference between the big guy's attitude and Mike's is the reason that I'll not be calling the big guys again.

Check out the Mud Puddle Real Estate blog and podcast at MUDDPUDDLE.PODBEAN.COM.