CAPSTAN
our strength. your tax savings.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT REFERRAL PARTNER

A CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING SPECIALTY TAX INCENTIVE PROVIDERS

Exploring your options? Use our helpful checklist to identify strengths, spot risks, and make an informed selection.

SECTION 1: UNIVERSAL CRITERIA (For Any Service Partner)

PROCEED WITH CONFIDENCE	PROCEED WITH CAUTION
☐ Respects and strengthens the CPA–client relationship	☐ Undermines or disregards CPA–client relationship
☐ Proven expertise; strong credentials and experience	☐ Weak or inconsistent technical qualifications
☐ Clear communication, accessible when needed	☐ Hard to reach; vague or shifting timelines
☐ Adapts to your preferred workflow and firm culture	☐ Rigid processes; force their style on your clients
☐ Consistent, reliable deliverables and team approach	☐ Team gives conflicting information; uneven execution
☐ Ethical conduct; stands behind their work	☐ Hesitant to support deliverables or address errors

SECTION 2: REAL ESTATE TAX INCENTIVE PROVIDERS (Cost Segregation, 179D, ITC/CEIC)

PROCEED WITH CONFIDENCE	PROCEED WITH CAUTION
☐ Multidisciplinary team: engineers, CPAs, accountants, attorneys	☐ No engineering-based methodology; no request for plans/blueprints
☐ Experience with a wide range of property types, including specialty assets	☐ Only familiar with generic property types; inexperienced with unique assets
☐ Strong working relationships with CPAs; collaborative approach	☐ Poor communication with CPAs; doesn't integrate with overall tax strategy
☐ Helps proactively identify additional incentives; provides CPA education/resources	☐ Focuses narrowly on one service; no strategic input offered
☐ Complimentary feasibility analysis before engagement	☐ Requires signing before determining feasibility
☐ Candid when a study is not worthwhile	☐ Pushes studies even when benefit is minimal
☐ Thorough site visits with detailed documentation and photography	☐ Claims site visits aren't necessary or conducts cursory walkthroughs
☐ Reports include full asset listings, class lives, ATG elements; ties to total spend	☐ Short, thin, generic reports lacking documentation
☐ Uses RS Means data where appropriate for costing	☐ Uses outdated or inappropriate cost data
☐ Provides timely report delivery	☐ Delayed or unpredictable turnaround
☐ Provides audit support as needed	☐ Cannot or will not support their studies in an audit
	☐ Uses percentage-based fees (Circular 230 violation)
	☐ Attempts to cross-sell unrelated products (e.g., investments).
	☐ Performs 179D inspections without proper jurisdiction

©2025 Capstan Tax Strategies. All rights reserved.

CAPSTAN
our strength. your tax savings.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT REFERRAL PARTNER

SECTION 3: R&D TAX CREDIT PROVIDERS

PROCEED WITH CONFIDENCE

- ☐ Team includes SMEs in software, engineering, construction, manufacturing, life sciences, architecture, etc
- ☐ Attorneys address funded research and contract issues
- ☐ Process minimizes client burden; leverages existing documentation
- ☐ Uses IRS-preferred Project-Based Analysis (PBA)
- ☐ Conducts individual interviews rather than mass surveys
- ☐ Human-led data analysis with professional review.
- ☐ Comprehensive final report with full qualitative + quantitative support
- ☐ Reasonable turnaround in line with industry norms
- ☐ Transparent, flat-fee pricing tied to scope
- ☐ Performs early feasibility review of contracts/ documentation

PROCEED WITH CAUTION

- ☐ Generic team lacking industry-specific expertise
- ☐ No attorneys; expects clients to interpret legal language
- ☐ High client burden; inefficient or disorganized workflow
- ☐ One-size-fits-all approach; does not analyze by project
- ☐ Relies on mass surveys or questionnaires
- ☐ Leans heavily on AI for analysis instead of professional judgment.
- ☐ Light, templated, or incomplete reporting
- ☐ Indefinite or unrealistic timelines
- ☐ Percentage-based fee **(Circular 230 violation)**
- ☐ Doesn't confirm feasibility until after signing

©2025 Capstan Tax Strategies. All rights reserved.