

Industry Cluster Interview Questions

Date Completed: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Decline Interview: Yes No

Company Information:

1. Company Name:

Street:

City:

State: PA

Zip:

County:

DUN & Bradstreet Number: (optional)

Contact Information:

2. Salutation: Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms. Mr. & Mrs.

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

Telephone: ()

Phone Ext:

Fax: ()

E-Mail:

Website Address: http://

General Information:

3. Detailed Company Description:

4. Year Established:
5. # employees: _____ full-time _____ part-time
6. Major SIC or NAICS code:
7. Does your company Export? Yes or No Import? Yes or No
8. Minority Owned: Yes or No Woman Owned: Yes or No
9. Government Sales: Prime? Yes or No Subcontract? Yes or No
10. What part of your firm(s) is/are located in the region?
Please circle those that apply:
Headquarters Research and development Manufacturing Other_____

Industry Cluster Information:

11. Industry clusters are comprised of companies that co-locate in close proximity because of shared linkages such as similar technologies, related products, shared customers, buyer-supplier relationships or a common labor pool, that present the opportunity for competitive advantage. You have been selected to participate in this interview because a partnership of regional workforce, economic development, and educational entities have classified your industry as part of four (4) major industry clusters in Central Pennsylvania. Given this definition:

- a.) Were you aware that your industry might be classified as a cluster?

Social Capital:

12. Name up to three individuals or organizations with which you have COLLABORATED in the recent past (for example, to bid on contracts together, attend trade show together, help fill an order, share equipment or services, or participate in an industry education partnership), and the type of cooperation. *Interviewer Note: Collaboration is defined as being beneficial to both parties.*

13. Name up to three individuals or organizations (this may be, for example, a technical school, competitor, customer, supplier, or consultant) that have helped you recently in some way. (such as gave advice, shared information, or loaned equipment) and form of help (advice, production, loan). *Interviewer Note: Please have them indicate whether it was fee based or free.*

14. Name up to three organizations and their locations, which YOU have recently helped out in some way (such as gave advice, shared information, or loaned equipment) and form of help (advice, production, loan).
15. Who do you consider to be leaders or innovators in your industry? (Probe for at least 3.)
16. What are the most important business groups, affiliations, and/or professional organizations that your company belongs to? Why are they important to you? (Probe for at least 3)
17. What are the most important advisory committees and/or boards that your company is involved in?
18. Do you think it would be important for your company to participate in more local/regional networking opportunities? If yes, please describe.

Marketing & Sales:

19. What are your annual sales?
- Confidential < \$250,000 \$250,000-\$500,000 \$500,001-\$999,999
- \$1 MM-\$5 MM \$5.1 MM- \$10 MM \$10.1 MM-\$15 MM > \$15 MM
20. Do you expect your sales to decline, grow, or remain status quo over the next 12 months?
- Decline Status Quo/No Growth Growth
21. Do you have an Internet connection? If yes, which option best describes your connection?
- T1 or higher
- High Speed (DSL, Cable, Wireless)
- Dial Up
- None (if none, go to question #26)

22. What is your current level of Internet connectivity?
 adequate/appropriate need more N/A
23. Do you know of any other connection options that may be available in your area with comparable or better service than your present provider?
 yes no
24. Did the availability of broadband factor into your company's decision to locate/expand into this area or will it be a factor when you decide to expand in the future?
 yes no N/A
25. Do you conduct any business online? If yes, which form of e-commerce do you use?
 online transactional based selling online transactional based purchasing
(ex. Shopping cart, paying with credit card, completing transaction online)
 website/online directories online banking
 electronic correspondence (e-mail) None
 N/A Other _____
26. What other channels do you use to market your product/services?
 trade shows trade magazines
 direct sales direct mail
 television radio
 other _____
27. Specifically, who are the most important customers of this firm's products/services?

Customers			
Customers	Products	Location (City, State)	Why do they buy from you?

28. How does local demand for your products/services within Central Pennsylvania compare to the demand for your products/services overall?
 growing slower growing more rapidly
 about the same N/A

29. Specifically, who are the most important suppliers for your firm?

Suppliers			
Suppliers	Products	Location (City, State)	Why do you buy from them?

30. Is your firm purchasing significant services, products, and/or raw materials from outside of Central Pennsylvania? If so, what prevents them from being purchased in Central Pennsylvania?

- lack of suppliers
 high cost
 low quality
 N/A
 established relationships with current suppliers
 Other _____

31. Do you think this region could benefit from the development of a regional brand or identity?

32. Currently, the 10-County region is referred to by some groups as *Pennsylvania's Heartland*. Please indicate how accurate a description of the 10-County region you think this is and, secondly, how enticing this description is for those who hear it.

Pennsylvania's Heartland

- very accurate
 somewhat accurate
 not very accurate
 not at all accurate

Pennsylvania's Heartland

- very enticing description
 somewhat enticing description
 not very enticing description
 not at all enticing description

33. If properly and fully developed, could you see referring to this region as Pennsylvania's Heartland in your company's marketing efforts?

Business Climate:

34. Why did you locate to this area? Please rank up to your top 3 options. 1 being the most important 3 being less important.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce/work ethic | <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to markets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of doing business | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to raw materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Incentives | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to educational institutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to similar/related companies | | <input type="checkbox"/> Spin Off |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Owned | <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | | |

35. What are the top issues facing your business at this location? Please rank up to your top 3 options. 1 being the most difficult 3 being less difficult.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of Health Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Globalization | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roads | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> On-site expansion | <input type="checkbox"/> New sites needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

36. Who are your main competitors? Where are they located?

Competitors	
Competitors	Location (City, State)

Workforce:

37. Do you expect your employment to decline, grow, or remain status quo over the next 12 months?

- Decline_#_____ Growth_#_____ Status Quo

38. Which job categories do you expect to fill in the next 12 months?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Financial Op | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance/Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Technicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

39. Which job categories do you find the most difficult to fill or retain? Please indicate (F) for fill and (R) for retain. Please rank up to your top 3 options. 1 being the most difficult 3 being less difficult.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Financial Op | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance/Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Technicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

40. What job categories are crucial to the success of your firm?

Please rank up to your top 3 options. 1 being the most crucial - 3 being less crucial.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Financial Op | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance/Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Technicians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

41. Which skills are most lacking in this region?

Please Rank up to your top 3 options. 1 being in very short supply 3 being less.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension | <input type="checkbox"/> Active Listening | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Quality Control | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instructing | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Troubleshooting | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Systems Analysis | <input type="checkbox"/> Decision Making | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

42. What are the educational requirements for the majority of entry-level workers within your facility?

(Multiple answers are acceptable)

- Previous work experience in a related field Experience in the field
 High school education or equivalent Post high school (technical school, etc.)
 Post high school (college) None
 Other _____

43. Name up to three organizations you have used (or your employees have used) for education or training in the past year (e.g. basic skills, IT, management, or vendor) and type of training. Are local educational and training institutions fulfilling your firm's workforce development needs? What are their strengths? What are their shortcomings?

Educational and Training Institutions			
Name of Institution	Type of Training	Strength	Shortcoming
1.			
2.			
3.			

Economic Development Resources:

44. Please indicate the regional economic development service providers you are aware of and used in the region.

Technology:

Ben Franklin Technology Partners

- aware and used aware and not used not aware

PennTAP

- aware and used aware and not used not aware

Industrial Modernization Center

- aware and used aware and not used not aware

Other: _____

Financing:

Industrial Development Corporations (IDC)

- aware and used aware and not used not aware

Chamber of Commerce

- aware and used aware and not used not aware

Ben Franklin Technology Partners

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Clinton County Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

SEDA-Council of Governments

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Lock Haven Enterprise Zone

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Williamsport Enterprise Zone

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Other: _____

Marketing: (includes exporting and procurement activities)

Chamber of Commerce

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Small Business Development Center

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

SEDA-Council of Governments

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Other: _____

Manufacturing:

Industrial Modernization Center

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

West Branch Manufacturers Association

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Small Business Development Center

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

PennTAP

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Other: _____

Workforce:

Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Career Link

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Pennsylvania College of Technology

aware and used

aware and not used

not aware

Other: _____

Business Development:

Small Business Development Centers

aware and used aware and not used not aware

SEDA-Council of Governments

aware and used aware and not used not aware

Ben Franklin Technology Partners

aware and used aware and not used not aware

Industrial Modernization Center

aware and used aware and not used not aware

Industrial Development Corporation

aware and used aware and not used not aware

Chamber of Commerce

aware and used aware and not used not aware

City of Lock Haven Enterprise Zone

aware and used aware and not used not aware

City of Williamsport Enterprise Zone

aware and used aware and not used not aware

Other: _____

45. Having completed this survey, would you say that your company is part of an industry cluster?

46. Whether or not your company is an industry cluster, do you perceive being part of an industry cluster as beneficial to your company?

47. Would you be willing to provide more detailed information on how your company functions as part of a regional industry cluster?