

Industry Cluster Interview Questions

Summary of Interview Responses

1. Company Information:

County	# of Interviews
Centre	15
Lycoming	15
Clinton	30
Total	60

Industry	Number	% Percentage of Total
Healthcare	7	12%
Hardwoods	13	22%
Manufacturing	40	66%
Total	60	100%

2. Contact Information:

3. General Information:

4. Year Established:

Year Established	# of Companies
1800's	5
1900-1949	7
1950-1999	47
2000-present	1

5. # employees: 9,315 full-time 1,471 part-time

Averages out to approximately 155 full time employees and 24 part time employees per company interviewed.

Industry Cluster	Full Time	Part Time
Healthcare	3,564	1,212
Hardwoods	436	16
Manufacturing	5,315	243
Total	9,315	1,471

6. Major SIC or NAICS code: See attachment B for SIC/NAICS listing.

7. Does your company Export? Yes or No

Export – Yes 27 out of 60 (45%)

Export – No 33 out of 60 (55%)

Import? Yes or No

Import – Yes 15 out of 60 (25%)

Import – No 45 out of 60 (75%)

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8. Minority Owned: Yes or No

Minority Owned – Yes 2 out of 60 (3%)
 Minority Owned – No 58 out of 60 (97%)

Woman Owned: Yes or No

Woman Owned – Yes 3 out of 60 (5%)
 Woman Owned – No 57 out of 60 (95%)

9. Government Sales: Prime? Yes or No

Gov't Sales Prime – Yes 10 out of 60 (17%)
 Gov't Sales Prime – No 50 out of 60 (83%)

Subcontract? Yes or No

Subcontract – Yes 18 out of 60 (30%)
 Subcontract – No 42 out of 60 (70%)

10. What part of your firm(s) is/are located in the region?

	Number	Percentage
Manufacturing	49	82%
Headquarters	42	70%
Research & Development	20	33%
Other	5	8%

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?

Pre-Survey Industry Cluster Question	Number	% Percentage of Total
No	42	70%
Yes	17	28%
Maybe	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Post-Survey Industry Cluster Question	Number	% Percentage of Total
Yes	34	57%
No	20	33%
Maybe	4	7%
Not sure	2	3%
Total	60	100%

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.

*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

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.

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*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

- 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).**

*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

- 15. Who do you consider to be leaders or innovators in your industry? (Probe for at least 3.)**

*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

- 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)**

*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

- 17. What are the most important advisory committees and/or boards that your company is involved in?**

*See Summary of Answers by Cluster.

- 18. Do you think it would be important for your company to participate in more local/regional networking opportunities? If yes, please describe.**

Regional Networking Opportunities	Number	% Percentage of Total
No	26	43
Yes	24	40
Maybe	4	7
Not sure	3	5
No comment	3	5
Total	60	100%

Marketing & Sales:

- 19. What are your annual sales?**

Annual Sales	Number	% Percentage of Total
Confidential	9	15%
< \$250,000	1	2%
\$250,000-\$500,000	3	5%
\$500,001-\$999,999	7	11%
\$1 MM-\$5 MM	15	25%
\$5.1 MM- \$10 MM	6	10%
\$10.1 MM-\$15 MM	1	2%
> \$15 MM	18	30%
Total	60	100%

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

Sales (over 12 months)	Number	% Percentage of Total
Growth	41	68%
Status Quo/No Growth	18	30%
Decline	1	2%
Total	60	100%

21. Do you have an Internet connection? If yes, which option best describes your connection?

Internet Connection	Number	% Percentage of Total
High Speed (DSL, Cable, Wireless)	34	57%
T1 or higher	19	32%
Dial Up	5	8%
None	2	3%
Total	60	100%

22. What is your current level of Internet connectivity?

	Number	% Percentage of Total
Adequate/appropriate	49	82%
Need more	9	15%
N/A	2	3%
Total	60	100%

*One company (Avery Polymers) that indicated they had T1 or higher, feels they need more broadband.

**Out of 5 companies with dial-up, 3 companies need more and 2 think it's adequate

***Among those with high-speed access, only 5 felt they needed more.

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?

	Number	Percentage
No	44	73%
Yes	15	25%
No Comment	1	2%

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?

	Number	Percentage
No	43	72%
N/A	12	20%
Yes	5	8%

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25. Do you conduct any business online? If yes, which form of e-commerce do you use?

Online Business	Number	% Percentage
Electronic correspondence (Email)	51	85%
Website/online directories	41	68%
Online transactional based selling	17	28%
Online transactional based purchasing	13	22%
Other	7	12%
None	6	10%
Online banking	5	8%
N/A	3	5%

26. What other channels do you use to market your product/services?

Other Marketing Channels	Number	% Percentage
Trade shows	31	52%
Direct sales	30	50%
Trade magazines	22	37%
Other	21	35%
Direct mail	15	25%
Radio	11	18%
Television	6	10%

27. Specifically, who are the most important customers of this firm's products/services?

Customers	Products	Location (City, State) (Ranked 1-5)	Why do they buy from you? (Ranked 1-5)
various	various	#1 Pennsylvania (48 responses)	#1 Quality (67 responses)
		#2 New York (9 responses)	#2 Price (55 responses)
		#3 Maryland (5 responses)	#3 Service (18 responses)
		#4 Ohio (tie) (4 responses)	#4 Location (14 responses)
		#4 Massachusetts (tie) (4 responses)	#5 Relationship with customer (8 responses)

**Most of the companies surveyed had multiple answers for this question. The reason the customer buys from them was counted to determine the ranking. (example: "quality" was mentioned a total of 67 times for the reason their customers buy from them.)

28. How does local demand for your products/services within Central Pennsylvania compare to the demand for your products/services overall?

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Local Demand	Number	% Percentage of Total
About the same	18	30%
N/A	17	28%
Growing slower	15	25%
Growing more rapidly	10	17%
Total	60	100%

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

Suppliers			
Suppliers	Products	Location (City, State)	Why do you buy from them?
various	Various (steel ranked high)	1- PA (54 responses)	1- Price/cost (138 responses)
		2- NY (12 responses)	2- Quality (50 responses)
		3- OH (7 responses)	3- Service (22 responses)
		4- TX (5 responses)	4- Product (19 responses)
		5- VA (4 responses)	5- Availability (14 responses)

**Most of the companies surveyed had multiple answers for this question. The reason they buy from a supplier was counted to determine the ranking. (example: “price/cost” was mentioned a total of 138 times for the reason they buy from a supplier.)

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?

Purchasing Outside PA?	Number
Lack of suppliers	41
N/A	16
Other	5
High cost	3
Established relationships with current suppliers	2
Low quality	1

*Of the 5 companies that answered “Other”, 2 companies indicated that they thought their company was “so specialized” and a “niche market.”

**8 companies selected more than 1 answer to this question.

*** 16 companies answered N/A to this question. Those companies were counted as not purchasing significant services, products, raw materials from outside of Central PA.

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

	Number	% Percentage of Total
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Yes	37	62%
No	10	17%
Not Sure	8	13%
Maybe	4	6%
No Comment	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Comments:

“Susquehanna Valley? Already have one.”

“Yes. Only as it relates to Penn State University.”

“This region has a local brand "Happy Valley" and Penn State. It would be hard to surpass either.”

“Yes, promoting PA Hardwoods.”

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” Accuracy	Number	% Percentage of Total
Very accurate	5	8%
Somewhat accurate	35	59%
Not very accurate	12	20%
Not at all accurate	6	10%
No opinion	2	3%
Total	60	100%

“Pennsylvania’s Heartland” Enticement	Number	% Percentage of Total
Very enticing description	1	2%
Somewhat enticing description	32	54%
Not very enticing description	17	28%
Not at all enticing description	8	13%
No opinion	2	3%
Total	60	100%

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

“Pennsylvania’s Heartland” Usage	Number	% Percentage of Total
Yes	18	30%
Maybe	12	20%
No	30	50
Total	60	100%

Some of the comments from those surveyed include:

"Yes. His label says produced in PA's Heartland."

"Thinks of Harrisburg/Lancaster. Likes "Big Woods Country" monikor"

"No, think of the Midwest"

"Yes, probably if you capture an image"

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- "no, name isn't high tech enough, think of amish rather than technology"
- "no. reminds me of Iowa and cornfields. Boring. Doesn't reflect high tech image"
- "not really, could be convinced if showed results"
- "if was a description of the Heartland, why is the heartland good? Heartland in middle of nowhere?"
- "no. b/c not technical enough. Thinks agricultural."

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.

Why did you locate to this area?		
Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3
1- Family Owned (13x)	1- None (12x)	1- None (18x)
2- Location (10x)	2- Location (tie) (11x)	2- Proximity to markets (8x)
3- Workforce/ work ethic (8x)	2- Workforce/work ethic (tie) (11x)	3- Cost of doing business (tie) (6x)
4- No opinion (7x)	3-No opinion (6x)	3- No opinion (tie) (6x)

**example: (13x) indicates how many times that option was selected under that ranking.

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.

Top Issues Facing Your Business		
Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3
1- Competition (11x)	1- Cost of Health Care (20x)	1- Economy (tie) (9x)
2- Workforce (8x)	2- Economy (tie) (7x)	1- None (tie) (9x)
3- Cost of Health Care (7x)	2- None (tie) (7x)	2- Taxes (6x)
4- Globalization (5x)	3- Workforce (5x)	3- Competition (5x)

**example: (11x) indicates how many times that option was selected under that ranking.

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

Competitors	
Competitors	Location (City, State)
various	1- PA (62x)
	2- Germany (6x)
	3- CA (tie) (4x) 3- NJ (tie) (4x) 3- NY (tie) (4x)

Workforce:

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

Employment Growth	Number	% Percentage of Total
Decline	2	3%

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Growth	28	47%
Status Quo	30	50%
Total	60	100%

Employment decline total = 125

Employment growth total = 300

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

Top 5 job categories expected to be filled in the next 12 months:
#1 Production (22 votes)
#2 None (17 votes)
#3 Management (12 votes)
#4 Sales (tie) (8 votes)
#5 Technicians (tie) (8 votes)

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.

Job categories most difficult to fill or retain:		
Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3
1-None (16x)	1-None (34x)	1-None (38x)
2-Production (12x)	2-Sales (5-way tie) (3x)	2-Production (3x)
3-Healthcare (6x)	2-Engineers (5-way tie) (3x)	3-Management (2x)
4-Management (5x)	2-Administrative (5-way tie) (3x)	
	2-Information Technologies (5-way tie) (3x)	
	2-Technicians (5-way tie) (3x)	

**example: (16x) indicates how many times that option was selected under that ranking.

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

Job Categories Crucial to the Success of you Firm		
Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3
1- Management (17x)	1- Management (13x)	1- None (13x)
2- Production (13x)	2- Production (12x)	2- Management (7x)
3- Sales (7x)	3- None (tie) (6x)	3- Production (6x)
4- Healthcare (6x)	3- Sales (tie) (6x)	4- Engineering (tie) (5x)
		4- Information Technology (tie) (5x)

**example: (17x) indicates how many times that option was selected under that ranking.

41. Which skills are most lacking in this region?

Skills Most Lacking in the Region		
Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3
1-None (23x)	1- None (30x)	1-None (33x)
2- Writing (tie) (5x)	2- Programming (tie) (3x)	2- Troubleshooting (tie) (3x)
2-Critical Thinking (tie) (5x)	2- Decision Making (tie) (3x)	2- Decision Making (tie) (3x)

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3- Science (3x)	2-Problem Solving (tie) (3x)	
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**example: (23x) indicates how many times that option was selected under that ranking.

42. What are the educational requirements for the majority of entry-level workers within your facility? (Multiple answers are acceptable)

Educational Requirements for Entry Level Workers
#1 High School Education or Equivalent (34 votes)
#2 Post high school (technical school, etc.) (8 votes)
#3 Experience in the field (7 votes)
#4 Post high school (college) (tie) (5 votes)
#4 Previous work experience in a related field (tie) (5 votes)

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 (ranking)	Type of Training	Strength (ranking)	Shortcoming
1. Pennsylvania College of Tech (23x)	Various (computers rank High) (15x)	1- Courses/Programs/Classes (17x)	Various (none or n/a rank High) (64x)
2. Penn State University (tied) (7x) 2. In House (tied) (7x) 2. West Branch (tied) (7x)		2- Instructors (14x)	
3. None (tied) (6x) 3. South Hills (tied) (6x)		3- Local/close proximity (11x)	

**example: (23x) indicates how many times that option was answered under that category.

Economic Development Resources:

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

Technology:

Technology Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Ben Franklin Technology Partners	22%	31%	47%
PennTAP	7%	33%	90%
Industrial Modernization Center	22%	31%	47%
Other	0%	0%	0%

Financing:

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Financing Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Industrial Development Corporations (IDC)	33%	50%	17%
Chamber of Commerce	38%	52%	10%
Ben Franklin Technology Partners	11%	37%	52%
Clinton County Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)	22%	30%	48%
SEDA-Council of Governments	38%	48%	13%
Lock Haven Enterprise Zone	3%	25%	72%
Williamsport Enterprise Zone	2%	15%	83%
Other	0%	0%	0%

Marketing: (includes exporting and procurement activities)

Marketing Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Chamber of Commerce	22%	55%	23%
Small Business Development Center	8%	57%	35%
SEDA-Council of Governments	23%	60%	17%
Other	0%	0%	0%

Manufacturing:

Manufacturing Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Industrial Modernization Center	20%	37%	42%
West Branch Manufacturers Association	31%	27%	42%
Small Business Development Center	5%	54%	41%
PennTAP	7%	34%	59%
Other	0%	0%	0%

Workforce:

Workforce Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation	8%	20%	72%
Career Link	52%	34%	14%
Pennsylvania College of Technology	47%	41%	12%
Other	0%	0%	0%

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Business Development:

Business Development Resources	Aware and used (%)	Aware and not used (%)	Not aware (%)
Small Business Development Centers	20%	47%	33%
SEDA-Council of Governments	22%	60%	18%
Ben Franklin Technology Partners	12%	40%	48%
Industrial Modernization Center	15%	42%	43%
Industrial Development Corporation	17%	57%	26%
Chamber of Commerce	25%	62%	13%
City of Lock Haven Enterprise Zone	0%	35%	65%
City of Williamsport Enterprise Zone	0%	15%	85%
Other	0%	0%	0%

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

Pre-Survey Industry Cluster Question	Number	% Percentage of Total
No	42	70%
Yes	17	28%
Maybe	1	2%
Total	60	100%

Post-Survey Industry Cluster Question	Number	% Percentage of Total
Yes	34	57%
No	20	33%
Maybe	4	7%
Not sure	2	3%
Total	60	100%

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

Industry Cluster Perception	Number	% Percentage of Total
No	13	22%
Yes	37	62%
Maybe	4	6%
Not sure	6	10%
Total	60	100%

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

Provide More Info?	Number	% Percentage of Total
Yes	37	62%
No	17	28%
Maybe	6	10%
Total	60	100%