

2012 Economic Census -CNMI (IA-98183)

Cognitive Interview Protocol

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Amy Anderson (ADEP)

General Probes:

- In your own words, what was that question asking?
- What are you thinking about?
- Can you tell me more about that?
- You answered, “...” because...?
- I want to make sure I understand, can you explain that again?
- Can you tell me how you arrived at that answer?
 - What did you include? What did you exclude?
 - What records did you use?
- Reflect back on R’s answer and ask R to correct (“I want to make sure I have it right. I think you said, “...?””)

Before the Questionnaire:

- Please tell me a little about this company.
 - What sorts of activities is it involved in?
- What is your role in this company? Have you filled out government forms in the past? Which ones?
- Generally speaking, how do government forms get completed?

Now I’m going to hand you a copy of the questionnaire. We’ll go through it page by page. Please write on it, and complete it as if we weren’t here, to the extent possible. We are only interested in certain items on the form. I will ask you some additional questions as you finish these items of interest.

Page 1:

- What is your initial impression upon seeing the form?
- What do you notice?
- What information do you need prior to beginning the survey?

Item 1 (Employer Identification Number):

- Where would you need to go in order to get this information?
- Are you familiar with the 941-SS or 944-SS forms? Do you complete either form for the IRS?
- Are there any other forms or places where your Employer Identification Number (EIN) is listed?

Item 2 (Physical Location)

- What was this question asking?
- How did you go about answering item 2B (villages)?
- How did you go about answering item 2B (island)?

Item 3 (Operational Status)

- Did you have any issues answering this item?

Item 5 (Sales, Shipments, Receipts, or Revenue)

- How did you go about reporting the information for this item?
- What is included in this figure?
- Do you have this figure readily available in your books, or would you have to calculate this figure? (*if calculated*) what figures would you have to use?
- Does this figure exclude grants, sales tax, or other taxes?

Item 6 (E-Commerce Sales, Shipments, Receipts, or Revenue)

- Do you track e-commerce transactions separately from other transactions?
- (If not) How would you go about providing a percentage of e-commerce
- Is it important to you to track this information for your own purposes?
- What types of e-commerce activities do you participate in?
- Would it be possible for you to provide an actual figure versus a percentage? Why or why not?

Item 7 (Employment and Payroll)

- How did you go about reporting the number of employees for this item? What did you have to go through to report information for employees with FICA taxes withheld and without?
- What is your definition of a fringe benefit?
- In your own words, what is the distinction between “legally required fringe benefits” and “voluntarily provided fringe benefits”?
- What sorts of fringe benefits does your company offer employees?
- Do you keep detailed records for the costs associated with all of these fringe benefits? Would you be able to break them into “legally required” versus “voluntary provided”?
- Are there other examples of voluntarily provided fringe benefits that you recommend we add to the form?

Item 9 (Inventories – for those answering ‘yes’ to 9A)

- Note: for the purposes of this meeting, provide values for the end of 2009 and 2010.
- Are you answering using current cost or market value? How is this value recorded in your books?

- How did you go about reporting the total inventories figures for the end of 2009 and 2010? How easy or difficult is it for you to provide figures from the previous year (2009)? Are those records easily accessible?
- In your own words, what does the phrase “stage of fabrication” mean?
- (If ‘yes’ to 9C) Please tell me about how you would go about getting the figures for the stages of fabrication breakdowns.
- Are the terms we are using for the different stages of fabrication relevant to you?
- Are you books broken out into these different categories? What are the terms that you use on your books? If they aren’t in these categories, what would you have to do in order to calculate these figures?

Item 12 (Legal Form of Organization)

- What is this item asking you?

Item 13 (Capital Expenditures and Depreciation Expenses)

- What are the capital expenditures that you included in your figure? Equipment, structures, capital lease agreements, other?
- What did you have to do in order to supply this figure? Did it require any calculations?
- How do you account for depreciation expenses?
- What expenses did you provide in this figure? How did you go about calculating this information? How long would it take to gather the information for this item?
- How would you define “tangible assets”? Did you have any?
- What would you consider to be a tangible improvement? Did you have any?

Item 16 (Selected Expenses)

- What did you include in your operating expenses figure? Is this figure readily accessible in your records or would you have to do calculations?
- Did you exclude ‘cost of goods sold’ in your operating expense figure?
- How did you arrive at a figure for net purchases of merchandise for resale? What components went into this figure? Are the examples for what to include and exclude clear? Are there other examples that aren’t mentioned that we should consider?
- What sort of interest expenses did your company have in 2010?

Item 19 (Kind of Business)

- Did you have any issues identifying the option in this item that best fits your company? Is the description accurate? Why or why not?
- Did the headings provided help you to narrow down your search for the correct choice?
- Is there anything we could do to make this lengthy question easier for you to answer?

Item 20 (Class of Customer)

- How did you go about estimating the percentage of sales/receipts generated from exports? Did you consult with any book figures for this estimate? If so what?
- Are these categories meaningful to you?
- How would you define “household customers”?
- Do you keep track of your type of customers?
- How did you come up with the percentages for this item? Did you consult with any book figures? If so what?
- What other types of customers would fall into the “other” category for your business?
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Item 22 (Detail of Sales, Shipments, Receipts, or Revenue)

- How did you go about providing a percentage of sales/shipments/revenue/receipts for products manufactured at this establishment? Did you consult with any book figures? If so what?
- *Note if R referenced item 5 to complete this item.*
- How did you go about deciding what to report in item 22b?
- In your own words, what is meant by ‘principle business activity’?
- Approximately how long would it take you to complete all of Item 22?

Item 26 (Special Inquiries)

- What is this item asking you?
- How did you go about gathering this information?
- How would you define ‘transient guests’?

Item 27 (Ownership)

- How did you determine who was majority ownership of this establishment? Was that easy or difficult?
- Do you have access to this type of information?
- What did you think about the categories for 27A and B?
- **If CNMI born, how easy or difficult was it to decide between the two “CNMI born” options listed? How confident are you in the response you provided to this question?**
- Are there other options that should be provided?

Wrap-up

- How much time would it take you to complete this report (actual time, not elapsed time)?
- Overall, how easy or difficult was it to complete this form?
- Ease/ Difficulty: Which questions were easiest/ hardest to answer? Why?
- Perceived importance: Are there some questions that seem more important to answer than others? Which ones?

- Instruction booklet: Would you use the instruction booklet when you are actually completing the survey? Why did/ didn't you use the instruction booklet? What features of the booklet do you like/ dislike?
- Electronic reporting via Web:
 - o If you had the ability to report via paper, like you've seen here, or via the Web, what would you prefer? How come?
- Likely Respondent:
 - o Who would be the appropriate person in the company to provide the information the survey requests? Would that be you?
 - o What do you usually do when a form asks for data you don't have direct access to, but you know exists within the company? (Do you usually try to find out where that data is and obtain it yourself? Would you end the form to that person? Would you give it to your boss? Would you do something else?)
 - o Once the form has been completed, what happens? (Review process? How does that work – who reviews, who signs off, who “approves” returning it?)

Thank you.