

THE HANNON GROUP, LLC



NIOSH - In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guide

Construction Industry Executive/Decision-Maker In-Depth Interviews

November 6, 2019

[Note: All questions can be asked of the Owners/Senior Executives and Equipment Purchasers/Decision-Makers. For the latter population, the probing should be more extensive on the equipment-focused questions]

I. Background on Project, Conversation Guidelines, and Brief Introduction (2 minutes)

1. Explanation of the In-Depth Interview (IDI) Format
 - a) Explanation of the IDI format
 - b) No wrong answers, just looking for the expression of open and honest opinions
 - c) Role of the interviewer/facilitate an active and productive discussion
 - d) Reserve the right to move the conversation along
 - e) Good volume so I can hear you
 - f) Guarantee of Privacy (names not used in the reports, only general descriptors)
 - g) Participation is voluntary - you are free to decline to answer any question that you do not want to answer and to end the interview, without any penalty
 - h) If applicable: Folks on telephone lines observing the discussion
 - i) Interview recorded for analysis purposes only—do I have your permission to audio-record this discussion?
 - j) Any questions before we begin?

2. Brief Introduction

II. Personal Perceptions/Experiences with Construction Site Noise Levels (15 minutes)

3. What is the most important problem facing your company today? Anything else?

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to - CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer; 1600 Clifton Road NE, MS D-74, Atlanta, Georgia 30333 ATTN: PRA (0920-1154).

4. How does noise at your construction worksites compare with other problems?
5. Thinking about the construction workers your firm employs, on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being “not at all” and 10 being “a great deal,” how concerned do you think your average worker is about hearing loss? On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being “not at all” and 10 being “a great deal,” how concerned do you think your average worker is about hearing loss caused by noise exposure at construction sites?

Today, I would like to focus on exploring your thoughts on construction site noise.

6. Would you say high levels of noise at construction sites are just “a part of the job” or are they something that can be improved? How can noise levels be improved? [Listen for: right equipment, specific practices. Ask to define/specify].
7. What type of construction site activities tend to be loudest? Why are they the loudest?
8. What specific tools, equipment, or other machinery used at construction sites tend to be loudest? How so?
9. Do you talk with your employees about noise levels at construction sites? What do you talk about with them? What else? How often?
10. Let’s talk about the idea that noise levels at construction sites may pose health risks for construction workers. What do you think about that?
11. Let’s talk about noise levels at construction sites and the possibility of that noise leading to hearing loss for some construction workers. Do you know of construction workers who have experienced this? What happened? How did it impact their ability to perform their jobs? Do you know if any accommodations were made to assist them in performing their jobs? What accommodations were made?
12. Do your employees use hearing protection devices while on construction sites? If so, what types of hearing-focused Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) better known as hearing protection devices do they use (e.g., earmuffs, foam ear plugs, performed plugs, canal caps, other, etc...)? What else? Have they expressed concerns about them? What kinds of concerns? (Fit, proper training, effectiveness, etc...)? Do you feel as though they received the proper training to use these hearing protection devices? Could the training be improved? How so?
13. Have construction workers employed by your company asked for help in improving noise levels at job sites? What kinds of things have you asked for? Did your company provide them with any new equipment or changes in how tasks are done to help with reducing noise? Have these changes been helpful? How do you know?
14. Beyond using specific devices, do you encourage or ensure that your employees are following activities or practices that are intended to help them protect their hearing at work? What kinds of activities/practices? Do they help? How so? Could they be improved? How so? Do employees express concerns about those activities or practices? How so?
15. Does your company conduct employee training sessions related to noise and hearing protection? What is covered in such training sessions? How productive are these meetings? How could they be more productive in terms of helping construction workers protect their hearing?

16. Does your company pay for hearing testing for employees who work at construction sites? If not: why not? What, if anything, would make you reconsider paying for hearing testing for employees who work at construction sites? If yes: does your company have a policy on how frequently employees should have their hearing tested? What are the benefits that your company derives by paying for these employee hearing tests? Are there any drawbacks? How so?
17. Shifting the focus slightly for a moment, what are the most important factors for your company when deciding whether or not to purchase equipment or tools for use at your construction sites? Anything else? How so?
18. Have you purchased equipment or tools that are quieter? Why/Why not? What do you think about quieter equipment? Do you think they help construction workers protect their hearing? What are some of the benefits with quieter equipment? Are there any downsides to using quieter equipment? What are they [Probe: cost, selection, availability, quality]? Do your employees say anything about such equipment? What do they say? [For those that haven't used this kind of quieter equipment or tools, how interested are you in trying these out?]
19. What equipment or practices have been most effective at improving noise levels on job sites? How so? Anything else?
20. What would make it easier to have the "right" equipment or "right" practices?
21. What makes it difficult to have the "right" equipment or "right" practices?
22. What would encourage you to adopt practices that help improve noise levels and/or protect your hearing or the hearing of others at construction sites? How so? Anything else?
23. What are your thoughts on penalties for construction company executives who don't follow proper noise reduction practices and/or put their hearing or the hearing of others at construction sites at risk?
24. What are your thoughts on penalties for construction company executives who don't implement and enforce noise reduction practices and/or modify the built environment so that it is quieter?

III. Long-Term Impact of Noise (4 minutes)

Allow me to provide you with some additional information about noise and its impact on hearing.

25. 51% of all construction workers have been exposed to hazardous noise and 25% of noise-tested construction workers have a hearing impairment that impacts their day-to-day activities [hand this information out on a piece of paper for each participant to read along with the moderator] Have you heard this information before? What do you think about that? How credible is this information to you? How memorable is it? How likely is this information to influence your decision-making process regarding the equipment you buy for use at construction sites? How likely is this information to influence the noise-related practices and policies your company employs at construction sites?
26. High noise levels can lead to permanent hearing loss, which is a loss that cannot be cured or reversed. Have you heard this information before? What do you think about that? How credible is this information to you? How memorable is it? How likely is this information to influence your decision-making process regarding the equipment you buy for use at

construction sites? How likely is this information to influence the noise-related practices and policies your company employs at construction sites?

27. Another study revealed that workers persistently exposed to excessive workplace-related noise may be “two-to-three times more likely to suffer from serious heart disease than workers who were not exposed.” [hand this information out on a piece of paper for each participant to read along with the moderator] Have you heard this information before? What do you think about that? How credible is this information to you? How memorable is it? How likely is this information to influence your decision-making process regarding the equipment you buy for use at construction sites? How likely is this information to influence the noise-related practices and policies your company employs at construction sites?

IV. Communicating about Hearing Loss and Hearing Protection (8 minutes)

28. How do you currently get information about workplace-related noise and hearing issues? If you haven't sought out this kind of information before why not and where would you turn to get this kind of information? How useful is that information for you? How convenient is that information for you?
29. What is the best way for you to receive information about workplace-related noise and hearing issues? In what form(s)/formats? What would make that a particularly effective way (communication channel) of providing you with information?
30. What are some other ways you would prefer to receive information about workplace-related noise and hearing issues? How would those ways be effective?
31. How does your company deliver information on hearing health and construction site noise levels to construction workers? Any other ways? Why did you choose those methods? Have you received any feedback from your employees on these ways of distributing information? What have you heard back from them?
32. I would like to explore some specific ways that information on hearing health and construction site noise levels can be delivered to construction workers. For each, thinking about how you prefer to receive information, I would like to understand your thoughts on how effective they could be: [include the list below on a flip chart]
- a. Posters/signs Where is the best location (construction sites, equipment rental vendors, building permit offices, lumberyards or other supply companies) and why? What size? Laminated? Able to be customized?
 - b. One-page pamphlet/fact sheets/cards (for most of the below, distributed how? By whom?)
 - c. Newsletters
 - d. Brochures/booklets
 - e. Instructional videos
 - f. CDs/DVDs
 - g. Calendars/coffee mugs
 - h. Social media (please specify)
 - i. Websites (please specify)
 - j. Other (specify, e.g., TV, radio, in-person, magazines, newspapers, information mailed to home)

33. What do you recommend the focus of the content/information be in such materials? What information would be most helpful for you/your employees? What would be memorable? Credible? Compelling?
34. What would be your preferred approach/format for such materials? Facts? Real-life stories? Testimonies? Something else? How so?
35. What would be your preferred tone of such materials? Serious? Humorous? Focused on risks? Focused on benefits of employing proper devices/practices? Something else?
36. What individuals, organizations, or news sources do you most trust when it comes to providing accurate, timely, information on workplace-related noise and hearing issues? Why that/those people/groups/organizations? What about them makes them credible to you? Anyone else? How so?
37. Thinking about we discussed today, and thinking about the construction workers your firm employs, on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being "not at all" and 10 being "a great deal," how concerned do you think your average worker is about hearing loss? On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being "not at all" and 10 being "a great deal," how concerned do you think your average worker is about hearing loss caused by noise exposure at construction sites?
38. What would motivate your company the most to actively engage in practices to protect the hearing of your employees?

V. Denouement and Conclusion (1 minute)

39. Is there anything else you would like to say about hearing health and noise levels at construction sites, bearing in mind the work you do?

Thank you very much for your time.