# INDUCE interview protocol

This interview protocol describes the list of questions to be asked to the interviewees of each pilot company. Instructions for the interviewer are included in each section and displayed in italics.

**Goal of the interviews:** The interviews focus primarily on the drivers and barriers for energy efficiency improvements. Hence, the interview should be carried out as a relatively open discussion about these topics. The role of the interviewer is to prompt the interviewee when necessary, while avoiding steering the answers in a single direction.

**Interviews vs. energy assessment:** The energy assessment in T2.3 centers on basic company information and the management systems and technological improvements that are already in place. The interviewer uses this information to pick concrete examples for discussion, before the start of the interview. For example, an investment decision, or energy management policy.

**Scope of the interviews:** The scope of the INDUCE project focuses primarily on energy efficiency improvements. However, other means of reducing energy use of the company may be important as well, such as using renewable technologies for generating energy. If this is relevant for the specific pilot, you may decide to ask further information about their decision to use renewable energy technologies in the section about specific policies or actions.

Tips and tricks for the interview process:

* When switching to a new topic, you will have to bridge these topics explicitly for the interviewee. For example: “we already discussed the goals of your company. I would like to discuss your personal goals next”. The interview is quite long and about complex topics, so you need to guide the interviewee through the interview.
* Some interviewees may be nervous before the interview. Reassuring the interviewee before the interviewee is very important in this case. Mention that no answers are wrong or right and that his/her answers will be treated anonymously. In addition, establish a connection with the interviewee before the interviewee by, for example, asking some personal questions.
* Some questions may have already been answered by the interviewee by the time you get to those questions. This means you will likely not have to ask all questions listed in the protocol.
* If the interviewee does not know a question, give a practical example to make the question more concrete. You can also ask the interviewee to email you the details later.
* Keep in mind that the goal of the interview is to figure out the barriers and drivers for energy efficiency improvements. This means you will often need to ask follow-up questions to get to the bottom of things. Do not settle for answers that are very vague or general.
* Make sure you ask plenty of follow-up questions to figure out what the interviewee means exactly with his answers.
* If you are unsure whether you have interpreted an answer correctly, it is usually a good idea to ask the interviewee (e.g. “you just told me that you think that a lack of knowledge is the main barrier for energy efficiency improvements because people on the work floor have not been trained in the benefits of energy efficiency. Is that correct?”)
* If a respondent is unwilling to discuss information because it is confidential, try to move your questions to a more general level. The particular details of their production process are not always relevant to the barrier you want to discuss.
* If you forget any questions, you can usually email the interviewee with a specific question of the interview. I would advise to ask the interviewee about this at the end of the interview.

Before the interview:

* Ask for an overview/figure of the company structure, so that you already the formal hierarchy in the company.
* Practice the interview! Sit down with a colleague and go through the questions in the interview, especially the section where you use flash cards. Practice explaining the flash cards, so that you do not need to look up any card explanations during the interview. This ensures that the real interviews go smoothly.

## Basic information

Company:

Plant:

Name interviewee:

Job title of interviewee:

Date of interview:

## Introduction

This section is used to introduce yourself, the INDUCE project and the interview. The questions reported below are indicative; some topics may have already been discussed with the interviewee in previous communication.

* Introduce the goal of the interview:

“In this interview, we want to talk about the drivers and barriers for improving energy efficiency in your company. This information is used to develop a methodology and training program for other companies in the food industry. We hope to learn from your experiences in dealing with energy management and with implementing energy efficiency improvements.”

* Mention the duration of the interview (1 hour).
* Mention that any information reported from the interviews will be anonymized.
* Mention that there are no wrong or right answers and that it is not problematic if they do not know specific details (you may also decide to follow up with an email for questions about details).
* Ask the interviewee whether:
  + you can record the interview.
  + you can cite him / her anonymously in the report.
* Introduce yourself to the interviewee.
* Ask the interviewee to introduce her/himself. Prompt for:
  + Formal responsibilities in the company.
  + Daily tasks of the interviewee.
  + Involvement in implementing energy efficiency measures and/or an energy management system.
    - This information can be used as input for questions later in the interview, please take careful note of the interviewee’s responsibilities.

## General company & personal goals (7,5 minutes)

In this section you will discuss the goals of both the company and the interviewee (in his professional role in the company). The goal of these questions is to find out how important energy efficiency improvements are, compared other company or personal goals.

1. In your opinion, what goals does your company currently aim to achieve?
   1. Have targets been formulated for these goals?
      1. [If yes] How do these targets impact your day-to-day work?
      2. [If no] How do these goals impact your day-to-day work?
   2. What goals do you have in your professional role at the company?
      1. Do these goals align with the overall company goals?
   3. What other, more general, personal goals do you have?
      1. Do these goals align with the overall company goals?
2. In your opinion, what is the company’s competitive advantage?
   1. In your opinion, do these goals align with the company’s competitive advantage?
3. In your opinion, what should be your company’s future ambitions?
   1. Do you have the impression that other managers in the company share this ambition?
   2. Do you have the impression that other employees in the company share this ambition?
   3. What are your future ambitions at the company?

## Company goals for energy efficiency (7,5 minutes)

1. In comparison to the company’s other goals, how important is improving energy efficiency to the company?
   1. Why is energy efficiency (not) important?
2. In comparison to your other profession or personal goals, how important is improving energy efficiency to you?
   1. Why is energy efficiency (not) important?
3. In your opinion, what should be your company’s future ambitions for improving energy efficiency?

## Drivers and barriers of energy efficiency improvements (20 minutes)

Next, you will discuss the drivers and barriers of energy efficiency improvements. First, ask open questions without prompting the interviewee. If she/he finds the question difficult, ask them to think about recent successes (for question 7) or recent problems (question 8) in implementing energy efficiency improvements.

1. In your opinion, what has allowed your company to implement energy efficiency improvements successfully?
2. In your opinion, what is the main reason energy management practices / energy efficiency improvements fail to be implemented?

Next, you will introduce possible drivers for energy efficiency improvements. You will discuss the drivers using flash cards. First, introduce those drivers that the interviewee already mentioned in the question 7 (e.g. a high priority for energy efficiency improvements). Ask the interviewee if you have interpreted his answers correctly and whether the flash cards resemble her/his answers.

Then explain those drivers that have not (yet) been mentioned by the interviewee. Next, you discuss these drivers with the interviewee, using questions 9, 10 and 11. You should end up with a ranking of drivers. If drivers are not relevant in the company, do not include them in the ranking and keep them separate.

1. [For drivers that have not yet been discussed] In your opinion, has […insert driver…] been important for successfully implementing energy efficiency improvements in your company?
2. Are any drivers missing from this overview?
   1. [If yes, add the driver on an empty flash card]
   2. [If yes, ask the interviewee to explain carefully what he means]
3. Could you rank these drivers in order of importance?
   1. [The interviewee can graphically rank the flash cards, i.e. place the most important cards above less important cards]

**Take a picture of the flash cards**

Next, you will introduce possible barriers for energy efficiency improvements. You will discuss the barriers using flash cards that each contain one barrier. First, introduce those barriers that the interviewee already mentioned in the question 8 (e.g. a lack of capital for investment). Ask the interviewee if you have interpreted his answers correctly.

Then explain those barriers that have not (yet) been mentioned by the interviewee. Next, you discuss these barriers with the interviewee, using questions 12, 13 and 14. You should end up with a ranking of barriers. If barriers are not relevant in the company, do not include them in the ranking and keep them separate.

1. [For barriers that have not yet been discussed] In your opinion, has […insert barrier…] been detrimental to implementing energy efficiency improvements in your company?
2. Are any barriers missing from this overview?
   1. [If yes, add the barrier on an empty flash card]
   2. [If yes, ask the interviewee to explain carefully what he means]
3. Could you rank these barriers in order of importance?
   1. [The interviewee can graphically rank the flash cards, i.e. place the most important cards above less important cards]

**Take a picture of the flash cards**

## Specific policies or actions (20 minutes)

Next, you will discuss a specific policy or action that the interviewee was involved in. Which policy or action you will discuss will depend on your particular interviewee and his/her main responsibilities. Aim to select a policy or action before the interview, using the results of the energy assessment, reports or other information you have been able to gather about the interviewee. A policy or action that was not successful will likely give you more valuable information on where improvements are needed, so pick a not successful policy or action whenever possible.

For examples, keep in mind the types of decisions companies make throughout the policy, plan, do, check, act cycle.

* The implementation an energy management system.
* The implementation of a particular policy for energy efficiency.
* The implementation of a particular technology/measure for improving energy efficiency.

If time permits, you can discuss multiple actions or policies. Also keep in mind you will doing five interviews at each pilot. Hopefully, this will allow you to gain insight into a diversity of actions and policies. If you have not selected a policy or action, you can use the following questions:

* Where you recently involved in the implementation of an energy management system?
* Where you recently involved in the implementation of technologies for improving energy efficiency?
* Where you recently involved in the implementation of policy for improving energy efficiency?
* Did you ever come up with an idea to improve energy efficiency?
* Did other employees recently pitch an idea for improving energy efficiency with you?

The primary goal of this section is finding out the barriers for implementing energy efficiency improvements (or an energy management system). In other words, what is currently going well and what is not.

1. What was the goal?
2. Who was the main initiator?
   1. How did you/she/he initiate the implementation of the [EMS, policy or technology]?
   2. [If initiator] How did other managers or employees react to your initiative?
   3. [If not initiator] What was your role?
3. How were decisions made to implement […e.g. an EMS, a technology, a policy]?
   1. Who was involved in the decision?
      1. [If team-based decision]
         1. Were members of the team aware of the knowledge and competences of other team members?
         2. Did the team also involve specialists with a diverse knowledge base?
         3. Was the discussion within the team encouraged?
            1. How was discussion encouraged?
            2. How were team members encouraged to share divergent opinions?
            3. How were these divergent opinions dealt with?
   2. Was a decision protocol used?
4. How were disagreements or conflicts resolved?
5. How was [..the EMS, the policy, the technology…] implemented, after the decision was made?
6. Do you think the action or policy was successful?
   1. If successful:
      1. what was the main reason it was successful?
      2. what could have been done better?
      3. [if not main initiator / decision maker] what would you have done differently?
      4. what can others learn from your experiences?
   2. If not successful:
      1. What was the main reason it was not successful?
      2. [if not main initiator / decision maker] what would you have done differently?
      3. What could have been done to make the action or policy more successful?
      4. Who could have helped to make the action or policy more successful?
      5. Have you taken any action to improve the implementation process in the future?
      6. What can others learn from your experiences?

## Concluding questions (5 minutes)

This section can be used to delve into any remaining topics or ask for input from the interviewee for the training program.

1. If you could provide one suggestion to other companies for implementing energy management / energy efficiency improvements, what would it be?
2. If you could have received training for implementing energy management / energy efficiency improvements, what would you have liked to learn?

## Ending

* Take a picture of the flash cards.
* Thank the interviewee for their participation.
* Ask whether you can call (or email) the interviewee if you have specific follow-up questions.
* Discuss any relevant follow-up actions (e.g. sending the report of the interview for approval).