

Interview Guide (Manual: Screening & Defining the further process / Possible tools and inspiration in the screening process)

1. When a company or a company owner takes contact to you, what are the first thing you do to make sure, that this could be a relevant case for your organisation?

In terms of implementing the project in Greece and specifically for the EEA, every company that fulfils the minimum requirements, that is, first to operates for more than 3 years and second to be a Small company according to the European definition for SME's.

Other than that, any company that applies to the Project is a relevant case.

2. Can you mention three examples, where you from the very beginning refused to take the case - and explain the reasons why?

So far, the only relevant case, that we have experienced, is regarding the establishment of a company, which was very recent. That company had only one year of life. So, we had to exclude it from the process.

3. Can you mention one example, where you started a case, but then later realized that this was not a case for your organisation – and explain what happened?

It is, rather, linked to the level of commitment that a company top management or the owner is ready to contribute to the process. We have experienced, a few cases in which, though there were great expectations in the beginning and even a certain amount of enthusiasm by their side, it turned out to be a false alarm.

They were not willing to cooperate, by giving financial information and data, often not admitting that they are unwilling to provide those info but rather postponing the delivery again and again.

4. If you could choose freely from a personal and a socioeconomic point of view, what would in your opinion be the perfect size and type of company for your organisation, where you think you could make the biggest difference?

According to my point of view, it is not a matter of size and type. It may, seems that a bigger legal entity would be more organized and ready to cope with strategic and financial information, but from my experience, so far, this is not the case at all.

We should, keep helping every small company, no matter the type, or the number of its employees, given that the top management or the owner him/herself, is determined to work, alongside the consultants and the mentors during the whole process, undertaken by the project.

And, honestly, I can not understand the criterion of the minimum 3 years of operations, for a company to be eligible.

A company, might be a newly founded one, with less than 3 years of life, could have a good potential but, still, be in distress for various reasons and Early Warning, could provide significant support and guidance to them.

5. Do you do anything to target your marketing and your PR in that direction?

Actually, we have designed and implemented, via our Communication and Networking Consultant, a concrete strategy which is based on the principle that it is ok for an entrepreneur and subsequently for its company to fail, and that Athens Chamber of Tradesmen is, always present and willing to help.

This strategy includes, indicatively, storytelling in the media, organization of events, networking with the stakeholders and especially the various professionals that are represented at the Chamber, various relevant articles published by the Chamber, personalized letters and repeated newsletters to the members of the Chamber

6. If you look back over the many years you have been involved in your organisation helping companies in distress, has there been any change in the archetypes of the companies that you are helping? If so, what could be the reason for that?

N/A.