



Center for Workplace Learning

*We Put Learning to Work for You!*

# Center for Workplace Learning Metalworks Project

Organizational Readiness for Employee Development  
NEtwork 03  
May 2003

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Work funded under a demonstration grant from  
the United States Department of Labor

# Goals

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- Describe the MetalWorks Project
- Describe the “Readiness Research”
- Stimulate conversation

# MetalWorks

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- Federal DOL grant began July 2001
- Industry and educational partnership
- Targets metalworking industry
- LWIBs 3 and 4 – central, western, and southern Maine
- Dislocated and incumbent workers

# Three Big Goals

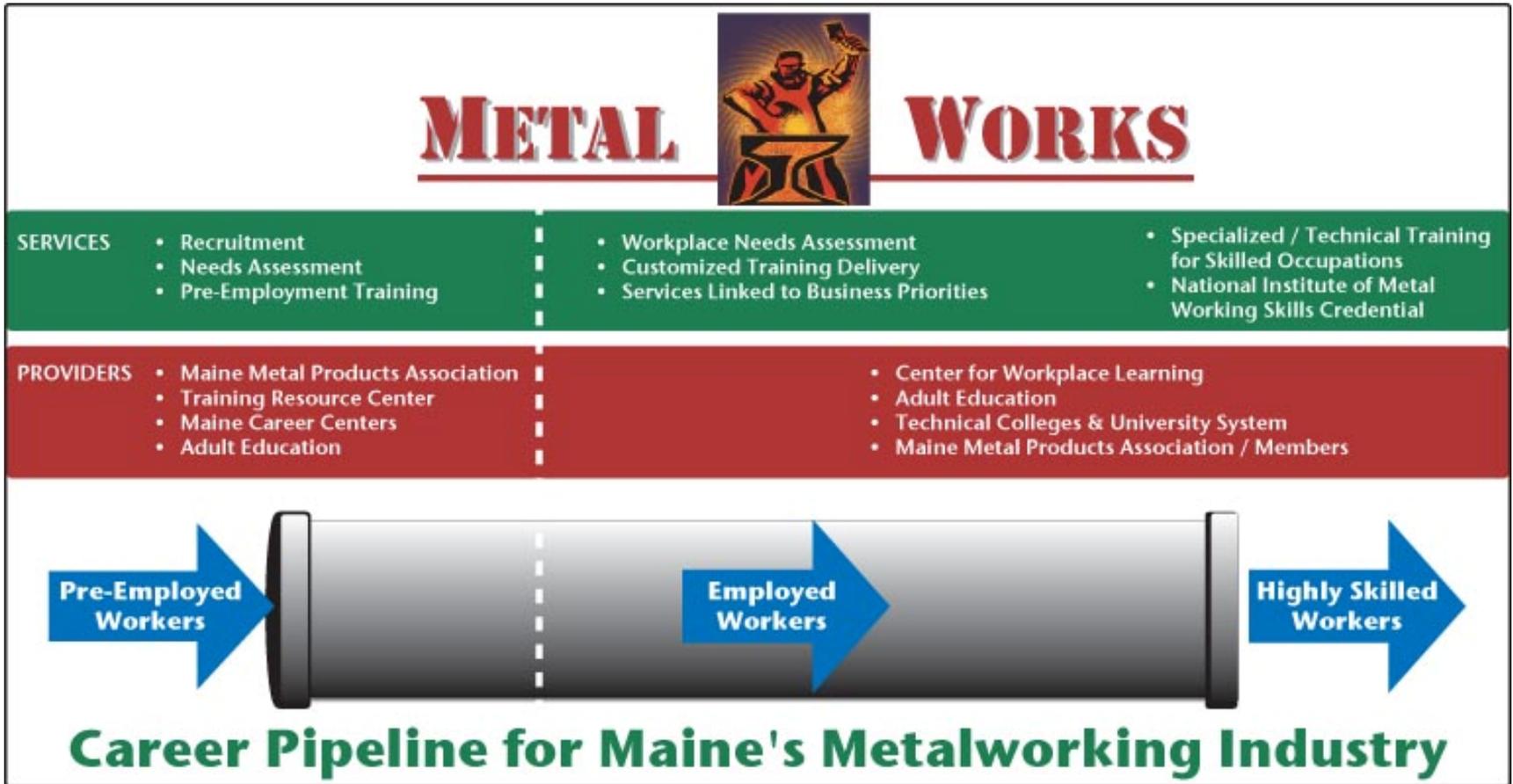
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- **Upgrade skills and qualifications** of incumbent and dislocated workers
- **Create a “pipeline”** of worker entry into and advancement in careers in the metals trades
- **Build capacity of Maine’s workforce development system** through collaboration among employers, education and training providers, LWIBs and CareerCenters

# Multiple Outcomes

- Outcomes we are currently tracking
  - Services to 500 incumbent, 500 dislocated workers
  - Continuing employment of participants
  - Increased wages of participants
  - Advancement to higher skilled occupations
  - Participant skill gains
  - Capacity building in workforce development system

# Career Pipeline



# Accomplishments

As of March 31, 2003

- 154 dislocated workers, 65 placed in jobs
- 212 incumbent workers
- 43 participants (dislocated workers) completed Technology Foundations courses in Portland and Lewiston
- 100% TF participants reporting skill gains
- 95% of incumbent worker participants reporting skill gains

# Capacity Building

- MetalWorks Consortium
- Workforce Development Coalition
- MOU's between MetalWorks Project and Technical Colleges
- MOU between MetalWorks Project, River Valley Project and CareerCenters

# Typical Courses

## For Incumbent Workers

### Course

- Precision Machining
- Principles of Metalworking
- CNC Machining
- Blueprint Reading
  
- Surf CAM
- AutoCAD
- Refresher Math
- Refresher Math
- Welding
- CNC Machining

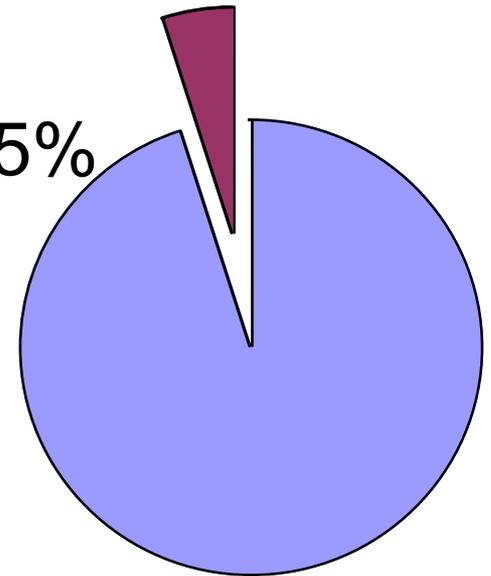
### Delivered in Partnership with

- KVTC, several companies
- USM ASET, Rich Tool & Die
- SMTC, several companies
- YCTC, Biddeford AE, Haley's Metal Fabrication
- CMTC, several companies
- KVTC, several companies
- CWL, Cianbro
- CWL, Architectural Skylights
- CMTC, several companies
- Mid Coast School of Technology, several companies

# What were we curious about?

Research= Curiosity + Method

- We contacted over 400 companies to inform them and offer our services, but less than 5% took us up on our offer.
- How come?
- What makes a company ready?



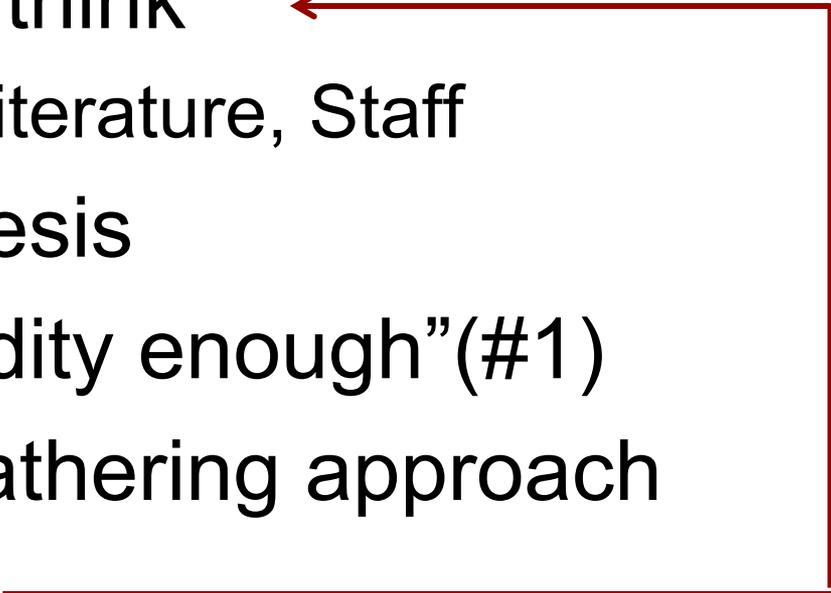
# Research Purpose

Determine those practices, structures, **beliefs and organizational cultural attributes** which are predictive of an **organization's readiness** to realize business results from employee development

# How do you know?

- What are the signals to you that a company is “ready”?
- What are the signals to you that a company is not “ready”?
- Output
  - A list of attributes
  - Ranking - three most important

# Research Method

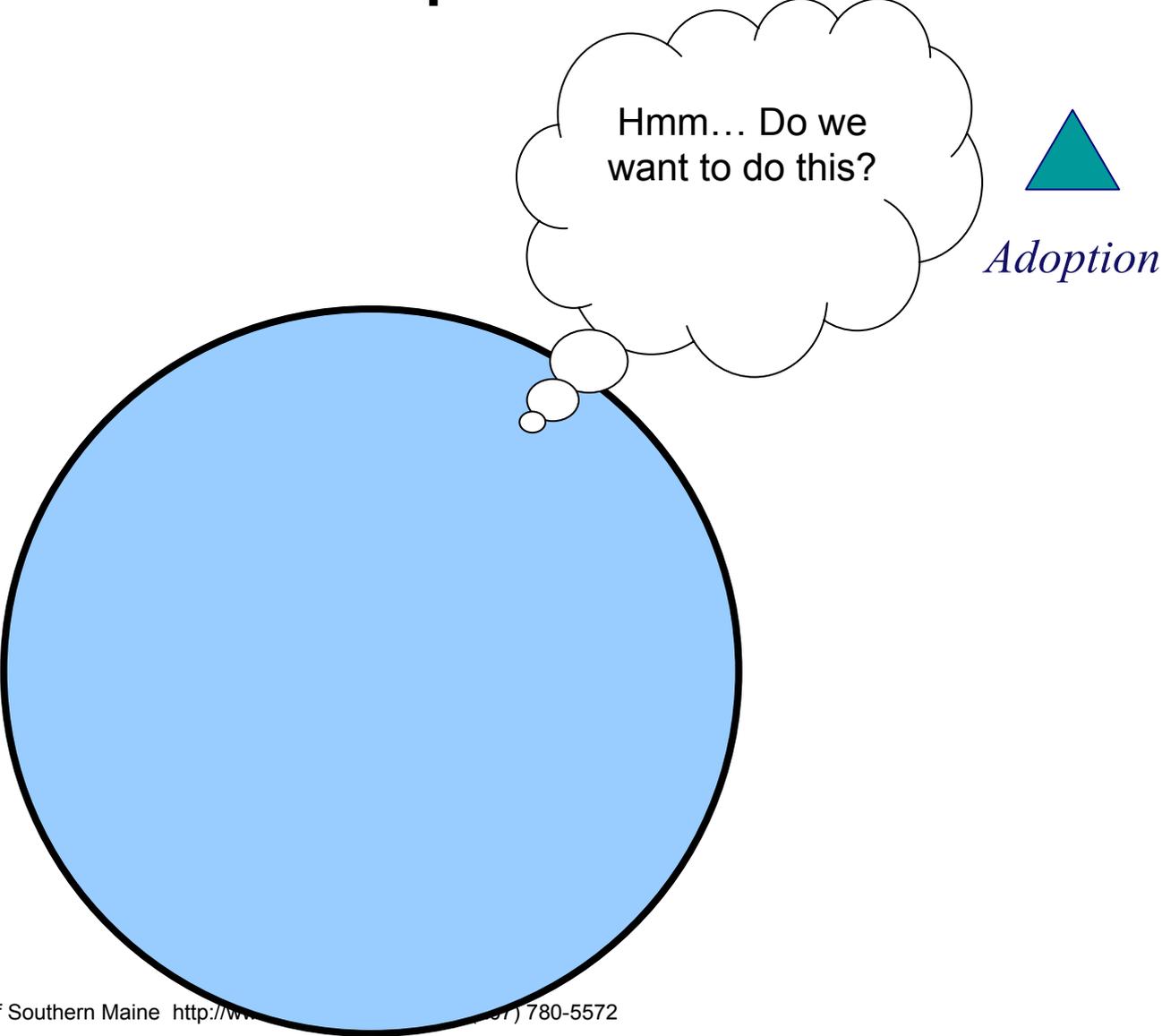
- Look, listen & think
    - Companies, Literature, Staff
  - Create hypothesis
  - Test it for “validity enough”(#1)
  - Design data gathering approach
  - Get the data
- 

*Repeat*

# Looking, Listening & Thinking

- Talked to “poster child” companies
  - 150 employee “high end” tool & die company
  - 3,500+ employee regional construction companies
  - 15 employee metalworking “job shop”
- Listened to people pitching Metalworks
- Literature “wander”, especially Schien & Vroom
- Thought about my 30 years in Training

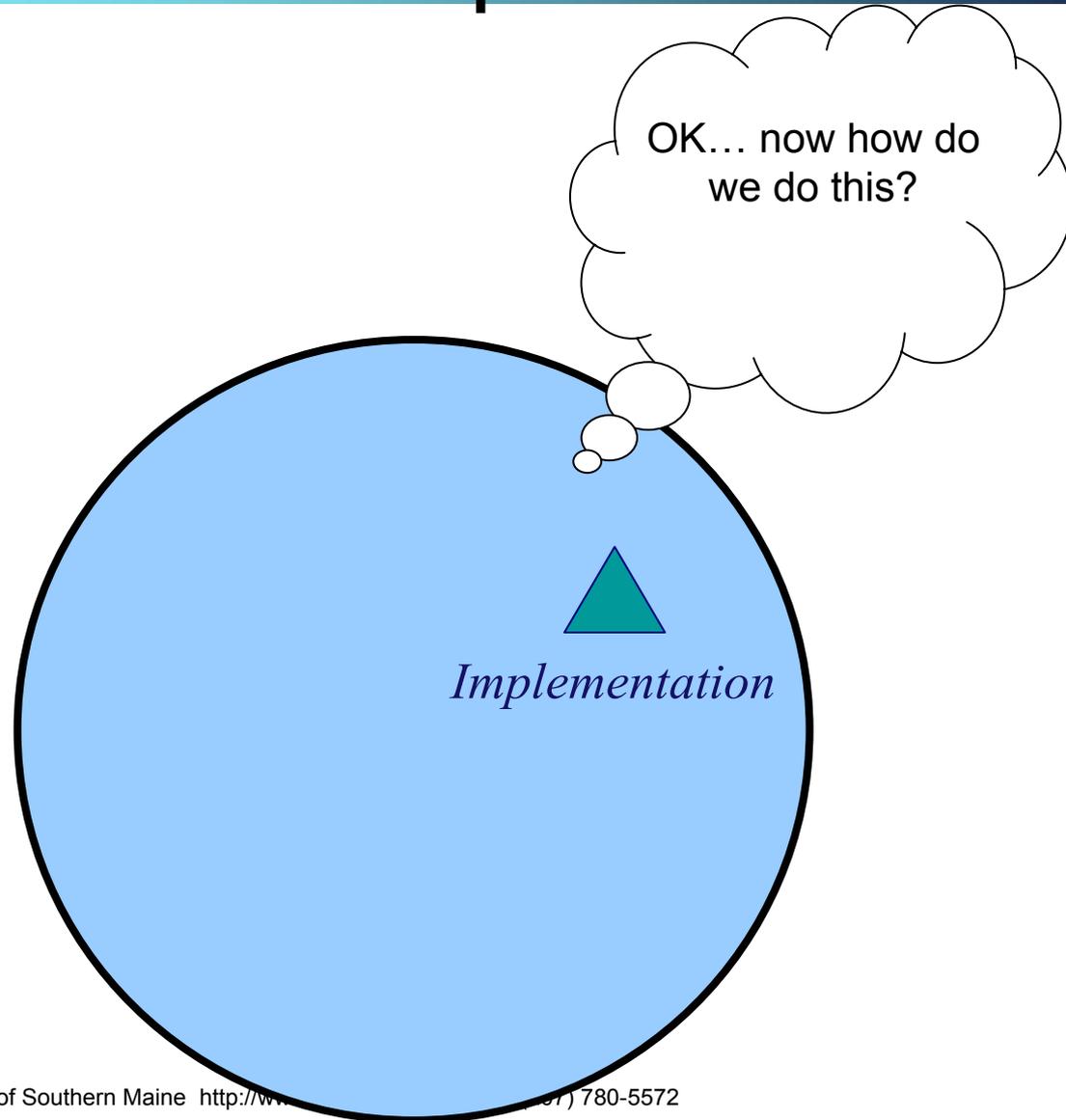
# Adoption vs. Implementation



Hmm... Do we want to do this?

*Adoption*

# Adoption vs. Implementation



# Initial Hypothesis

- Company readiness for training and other learning initiatives is a function of two factors:
  - The “**valence**”<sup>\*</sup> of the training offer
    - How much they want the results they might get
    - How likely they think it is that they will get them from training
  - The company’s ability to **tolerate the delay** between the expense of learning and the return on that learning

\* Victor Vroom “Work and Motivation” 1964

# Wanting the results

## Business Goals

Business Goal #1

Business Goal #2

Business Goal #3

Business Goal #4

Business Goal #5

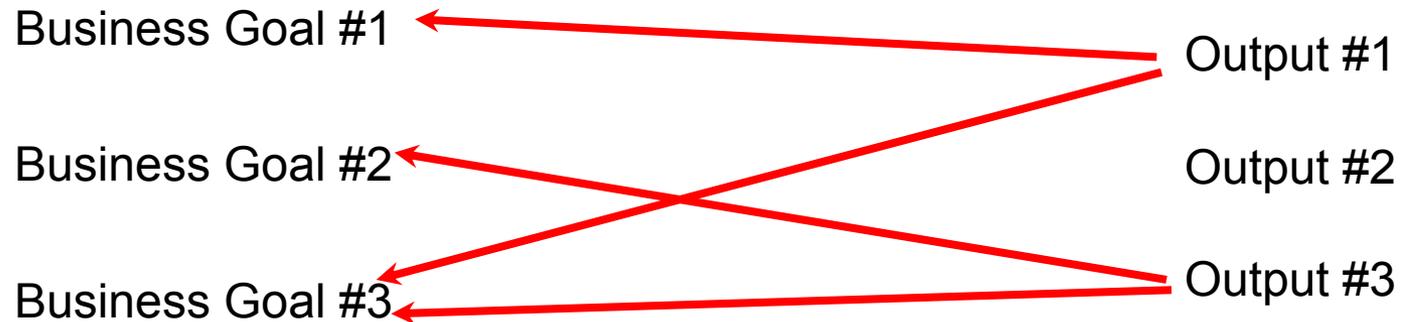
Business Goal #6

## Training Outputs

Output #1

Output #2

Output #3



# Wanting the results

## Business Goals

Business Goal #1

Business Goal #2

Business Goal #3

Business Goal #4

Business Goal #5

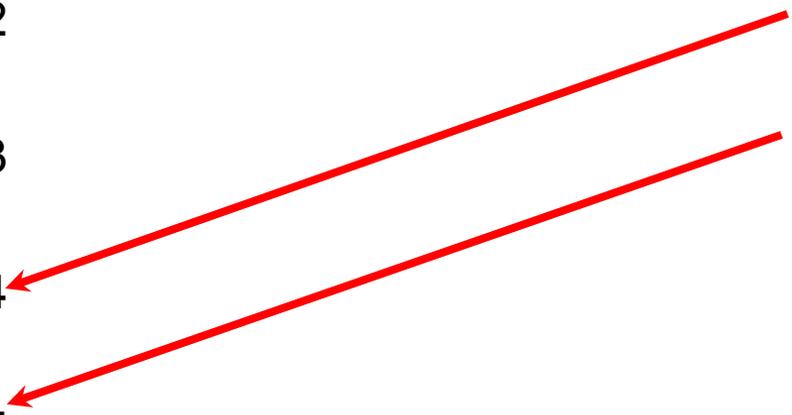
Business Goal #6

## Training Outputs

Output #1

Output #2

Output #3



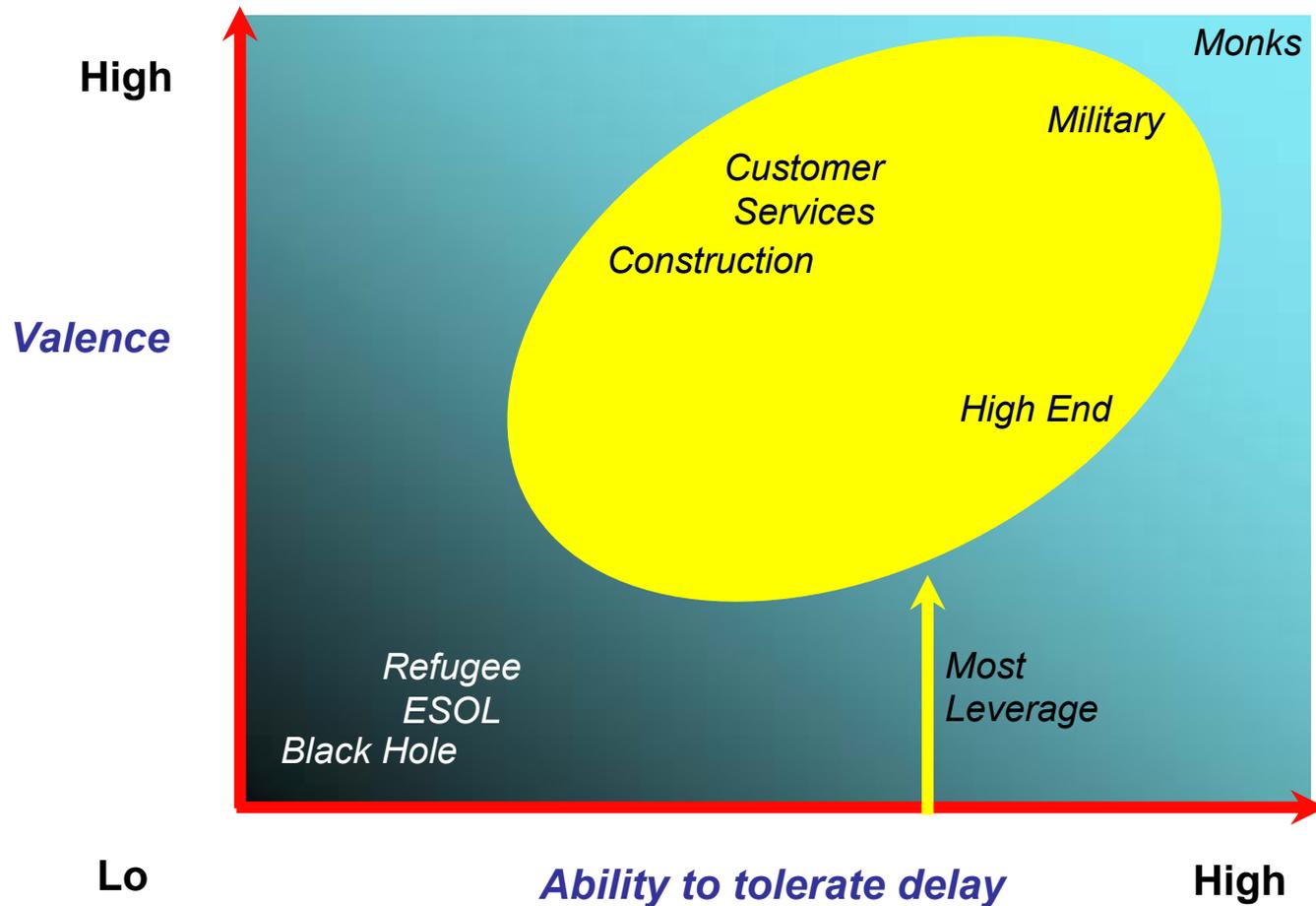
# Tolerating the Delay

- “Poster child” companies reference training’s contribution to a strategic purpose or plan
  - Strategic = Plans that look beyond immediate operations, involve most or all of the company, and carry financial consequences.
  - They describe financial, strategic and human resources returns
- Belief seems strongly influenced by past experience with training
- Altruistic Return = High Tolerance
  - Education is a good
  - Making Maine attractive

# Testing the hypothesis

- Thought experiments
- Data
  - Do companies that want training do training?
  - Do companies with the capacity to tolerate the delay actually offer training more frequently?
- Find out...
  - Amount of training that has taken place in the last year
  - The strength of the desire for training
  - The strength of the belief that it will meet business goals
  - The ability to tolerate the delay

# Playing with the hypothesis



# Progress Report: May 2003

- ✓ Research team identified and oriented
- ✓ Literature review concluded
- ✓ Survey instrument complete
- ✓ Sample identified
- ✓ Research approach developed

Survey research completed

Data analysis complete

Focus group approach developed

Focus groups conducted

Final data analysis

Preparation of papers and presentations

Submit conference presentation proposals

# Implications for Action

- Eliminate “Black Hole companies quickly
- Identify companies with tolerance and then work on the offer
  - Data demonstrating return
  - Linking of training to strategy
    - May mean helping them develop a strategy first
- Identify companies who otherwise would accept the offer & work on their tolerance for the delay
  - Reduce “Investment” side of ROI
    - MetalWorks
    - Governors Training Initiative
  - Good prospects when the economy improves

