

LISC BCO / FOC  
Conference  
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# Lessons from the Workforce Benchmarking Network

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**Good Jobs. Thriving Communities.**

# Evaluation?



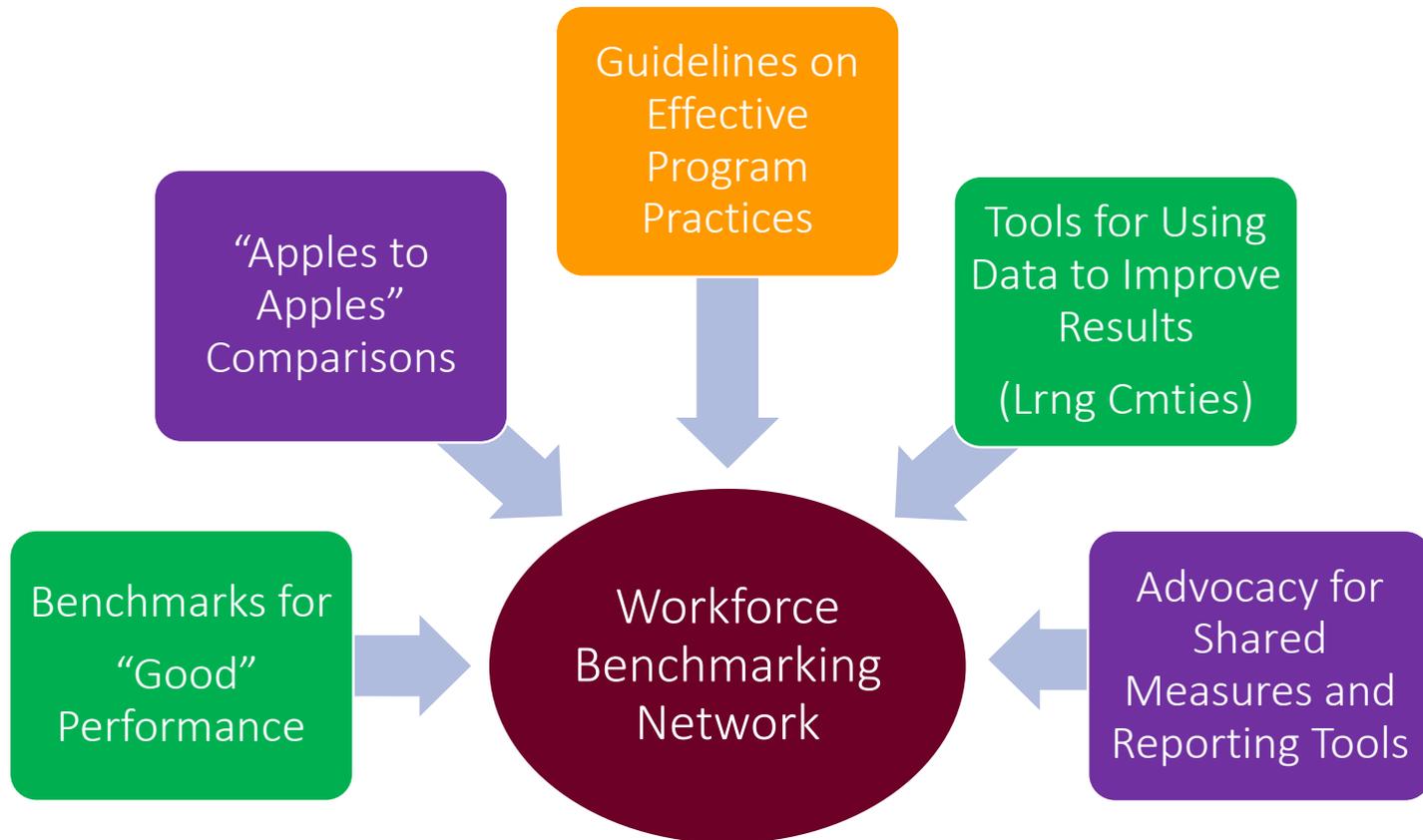
“We work in a world of true complexity, strong social influences, and tight dependence on local context—a world less of proof than of navigation, less of final conclusions than of continual learning.” *Don Berwick, Institute of Healthcare Improvement.*

## Evaluation: Another Way to Look At It



# Workforce Benchmarking Network

A Resource for Evaluation, Learning & Improvement



# Benchmarking Network



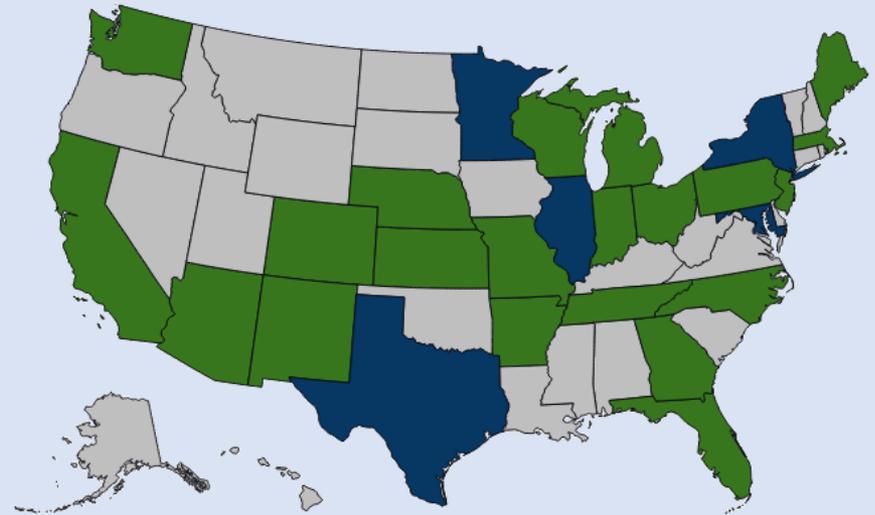
More than **500 programs** at **200 CBOs** have participated since 2008



In **62 cities**



Across **26 states** and **provinces**



Benchmarking Data Survey



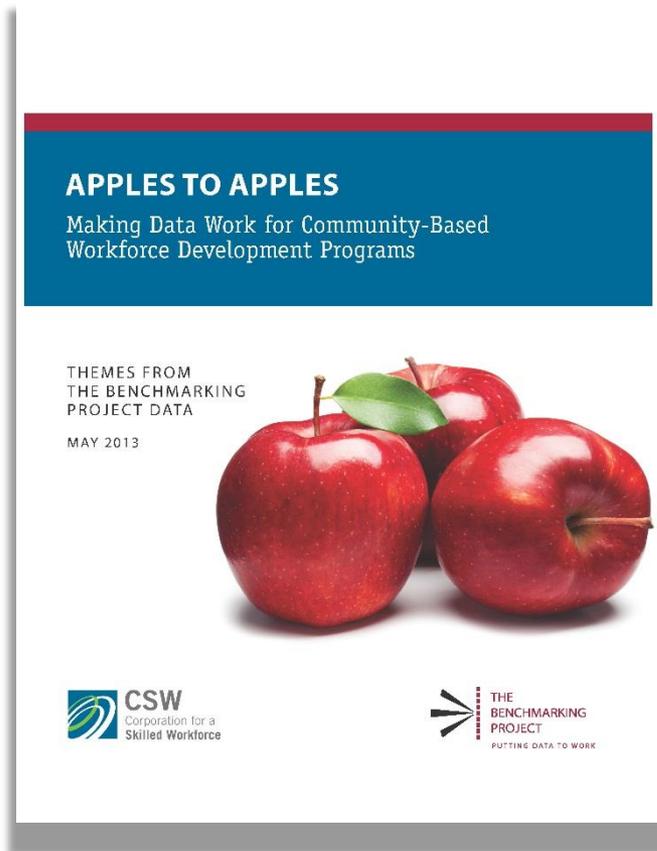
Data plus Peer Learning activities

Workforce  
Benchmarking  
Survey Data

AGGREGATE program data on a previous one-year cohort of enrollees:

- *Org type, workforce budget and staffing*
- *# Enrollments / Participant demographics*
- *Types & length of services*
- *# Completers*
- *Credential attainment*
- *# Placements: Definition + Wage/FT-PT/Benefits*
- *# Retentions: Definition + Wages (3 – 6 – 12 mos.)*
- *Data Verification Practices*

# National Reports: Benchmarks of “Good” Performance



## *Apples to Apples Reports*

- ▶ [2013 Initial Report](#)
- ▶ [2016 Data Update](#): more current data from over 250 programs
- ▶ [www.benchmarking.skilledwork.org](http://www.benchmarking.skilledwork.org)

# 2016 Dataset

## Overall National Outcome Benchmarks

Outcome	N	Mean	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> %ile
% Completing Program	184	73.7%	80.7%	94.9%
% Placement out of enrollees	259	50.1%	49.4%	66.1%
% Placed out of program completers	107	68.8%	69.6%	85.3%
% Placed in Full-time Employment	228	64.3%	65.6%	88.4%
% Placed in Jobs Offering Health Benefits	164	38.8%	33.4%	56.2%
Average Hourly Wage at Placement	239	\$11.25	\$10.15	\$11.96
% Retained at 3 months (out of placed)	204	70.1%	72.6%	84.3%
% Retained at 6 months (out of placed)	143	56.3%	59.1%	76.1%
% Retained at 12 months (out of placed)	87	44.3%	43.9%	64.6%

## Better Job Placement

- Higher job placement (76% vs. 69%)
- More full-time (76% vs. 58%)
- More health benefits (48% vs. 23%)

## Better Job Retention

- 3-month (78% vs. 69%)
- 6-month (68% vs. 56%)
- 12-month (46% vs. 39%)

Programs Offering Financial Literacy as a Core Service: *Higher Results!*

# Benchmarking Data: Program Characteristics Correlated with Higher/Lower Outcomes

## Programmatic

- Cohort size
- Ability to select clients
- Client to full-time staff ratio

## % of Participants

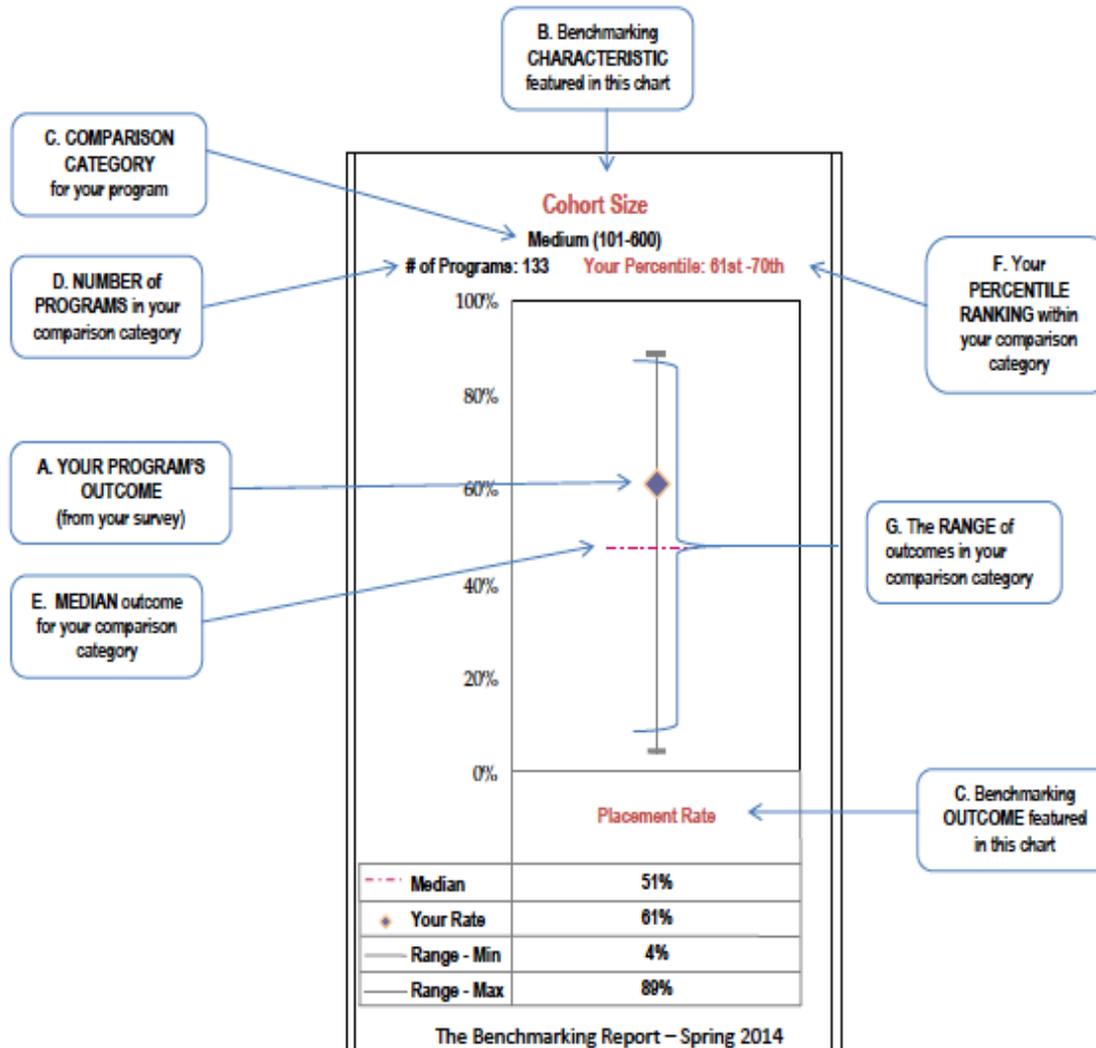
- Age 18-24
- Criminal background
- Disability
- Homeless at intake
- No diploma or GED

## Core Services

- Adult basic education
- Financial literacy / coaching
- Mentoring
- Occupational skills training
- Skills training leading to certification
- Work experience: internships & transitional jobs
- Post-employment follow-up services
- Weeks in pre-employment activities
- Hours/weeks in pre-employment activities

# Benchmarking Reports: How Do My Program's Results Compare?

## The Workforce Benchmarking Network: Interpreting the Chart



# Benchmarking Data Survey: Future Directions

2017-2018

- Seeking stakeholder input into national data survey
  - What results data matter now?
  - Do deeper dives: specific populations, services?
  - More interactive, user-friendly reports?
- Funding and business model to sustain data and capacity building work? Would orgs pay for this?
- New national survey – Fall 2018?

# Benchmarking “Continuous Improvement” Learning Communities

2012-Present: Chicago,  
New York City, Twin Cities,  
Dallas-Ft. Worth

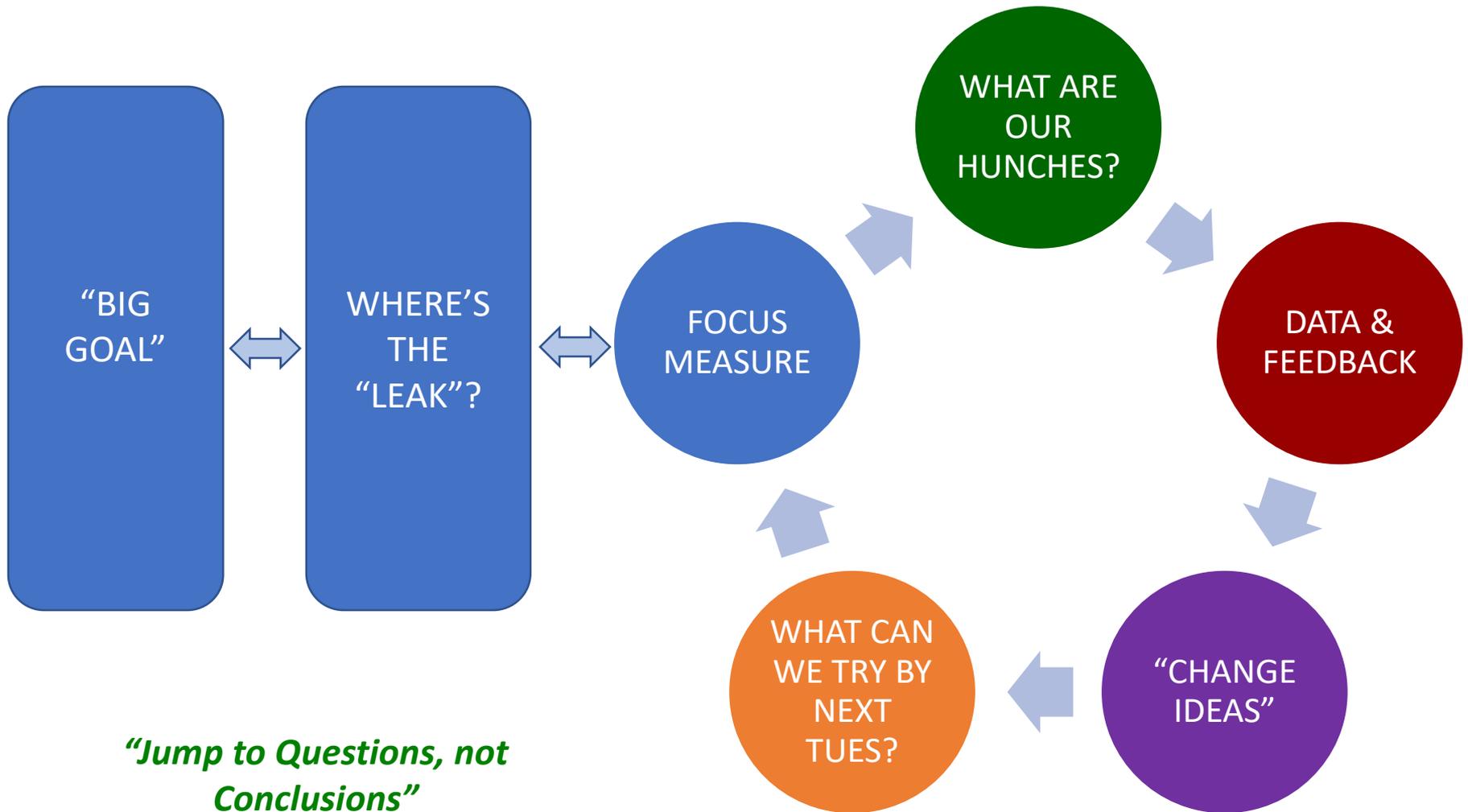
- Workshops on Using Data to Improve Performance
- Focused Improvement Goals
- Peer Learning Events
- Individual Technical Assistance

Reports on Results and  
Lessons

- [Nurturing Inquiry and Innovation](#)
- [Learning to Thrive](#)

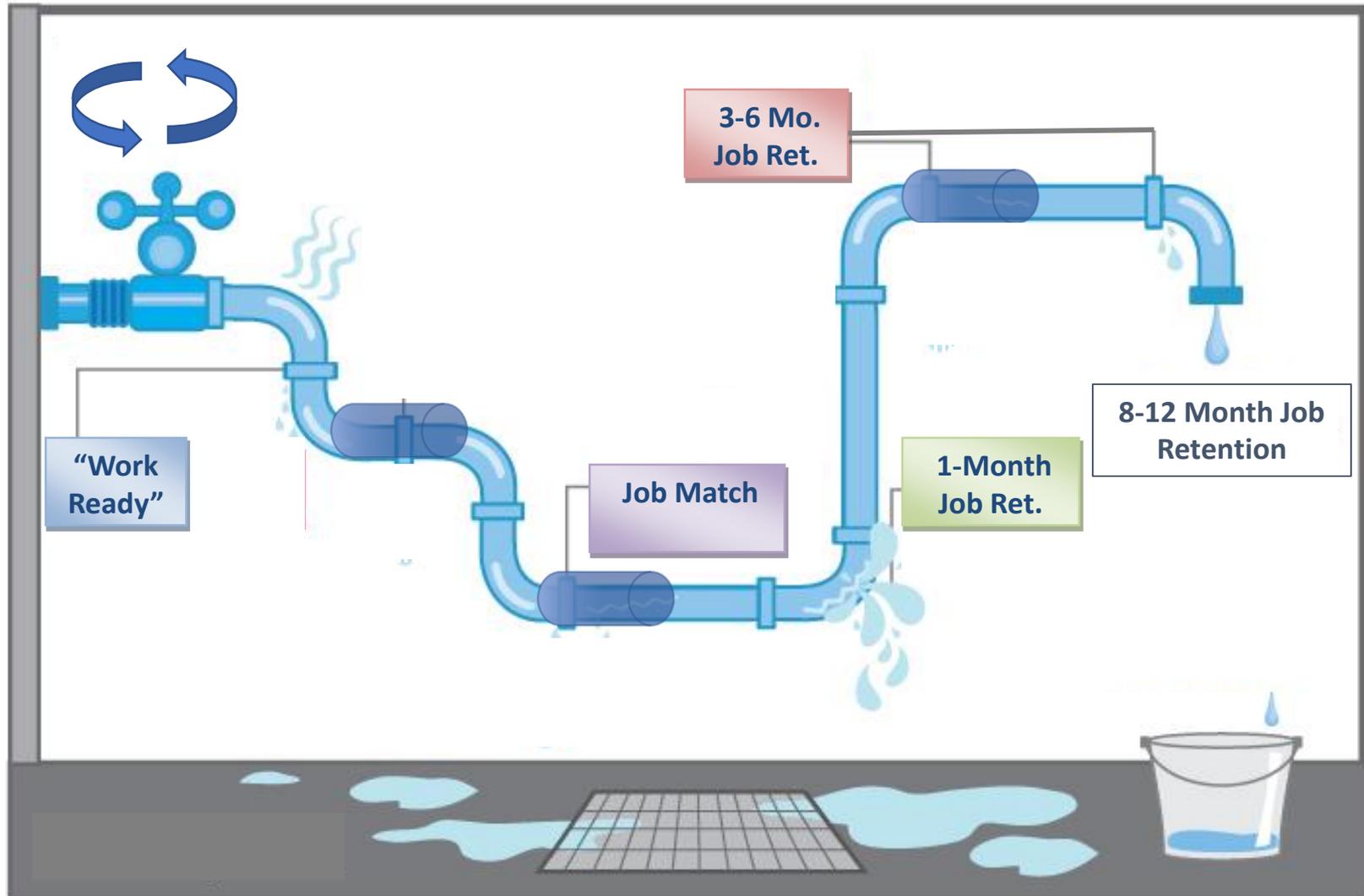
# The “Improvement Process”

Example: *Jane Addams Resource Corporation*



*“Jump to Questions, not Conclusions”*

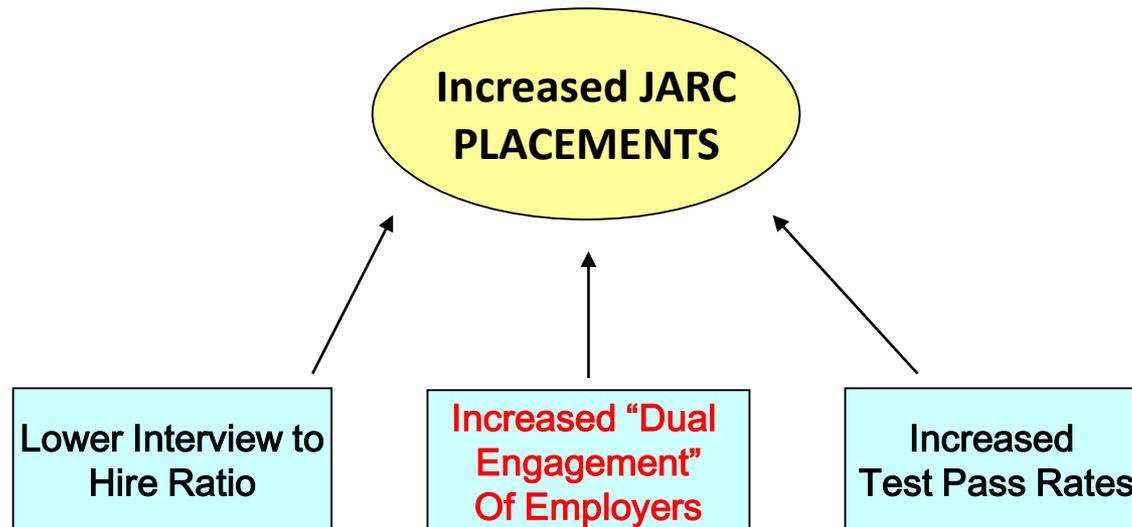
# Process Review: Where's the "LEAK" or GAP? Where is Missed Opportunity?



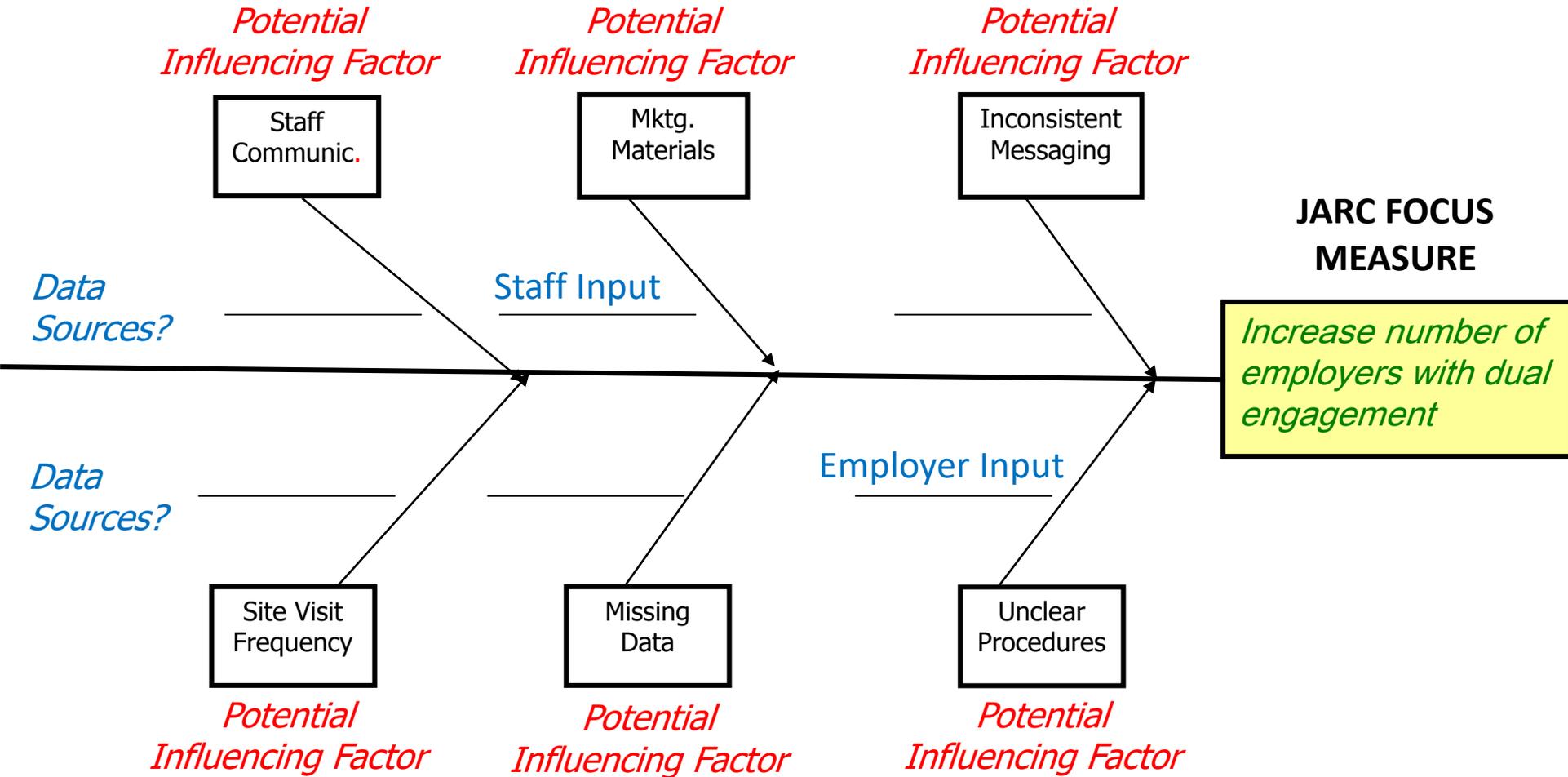
# What “Milestone” Result Needs Focus?

What short-term “stepping stone results” - if accomplished – are most related to success on your long-term outcome measure??

*Example: Jane Addams Resource Corporation - Chicago*



# What's Our Hunch? How Could We "Test" That?



# “Change Ideas”: What Can We Try by Next Tuesday?

**JARC GOAL: Increase employer  
“dual engagement”**



**Change Idea #1:**  
Increase # of  
company visits

**Change Idea #2:**  
Clearer package  
of presentation  
and marketing  
materials

**Change Idea #3:**  
Standardized site  
visit follow-up  
procedures – Client  
Services Agreement

**Change Idea #4:**  
More frequent  
business staff  
mtgs with shared  
data

1. Leadership must “champion” using data for learning and improvement (not just accountability)

2. Involve staff and clients/customers from multiple levels and perspectives

3. Make sure data is visible, accessible and useful for all staff – not just managers

4. Disaggregate data to focus learning and improvement

5. Embed regular reflection and brainstorming on the “factors behind the data” into meetings – it’s not an “add on”!

# 10 Lessons from Continuous Improvement Work

6. Create “safe space” when discussing data

7. Culture change takes TIME: be patient, manage expectations and celebrate often!

8. Don’t let technology or staffing issues get in the way – get creative!!

9. Ensure that someone is “driving” the learning and improvement process – it doesn’t just “happen”

10. FUNDERS: Be “learning partners” by supporting organizations’ improvement focus and helping to build capacity.

# 10 Lessons from Continuous Improvement Work (cont.)

# Contact Info

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