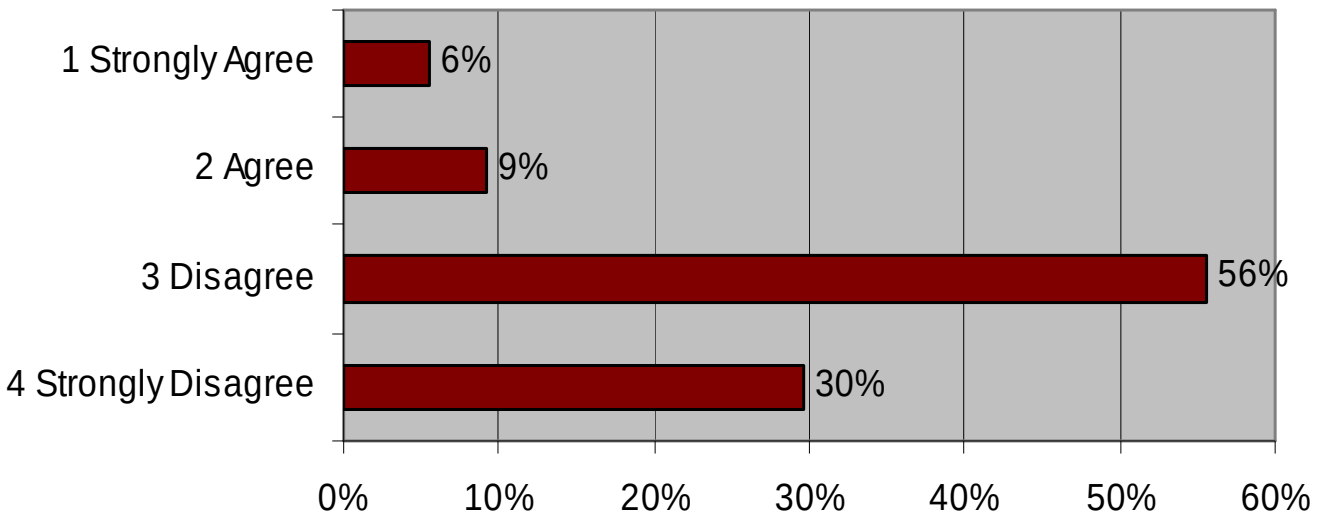
Employability

What is Employability?

- Sandra Peters, Skills for Life Co-ordinator, WEA
- Over 30 years' experience of working with employers in education-industry related projects
- 14 years self-employed consultant
- Most learners in my classes state that they are there to improve their job prospects or get a job
- - hence a passionate interest in employability !

"In the current economic climate, WEA provision should be focused around increasing employability skills."



Question:

- How well did your education prepare you for the world of work?
- Is there anything else that you wish *had* been covered to prepare you for employment?

What is Employability?

- Core Skills
- Key Skills
- Basic Skills
- Skills for Life
- Functional Skills
- Employability Skills

(All government curriculum directives)

Question:

- What would you say are the 10 most important elements that make a person employable?

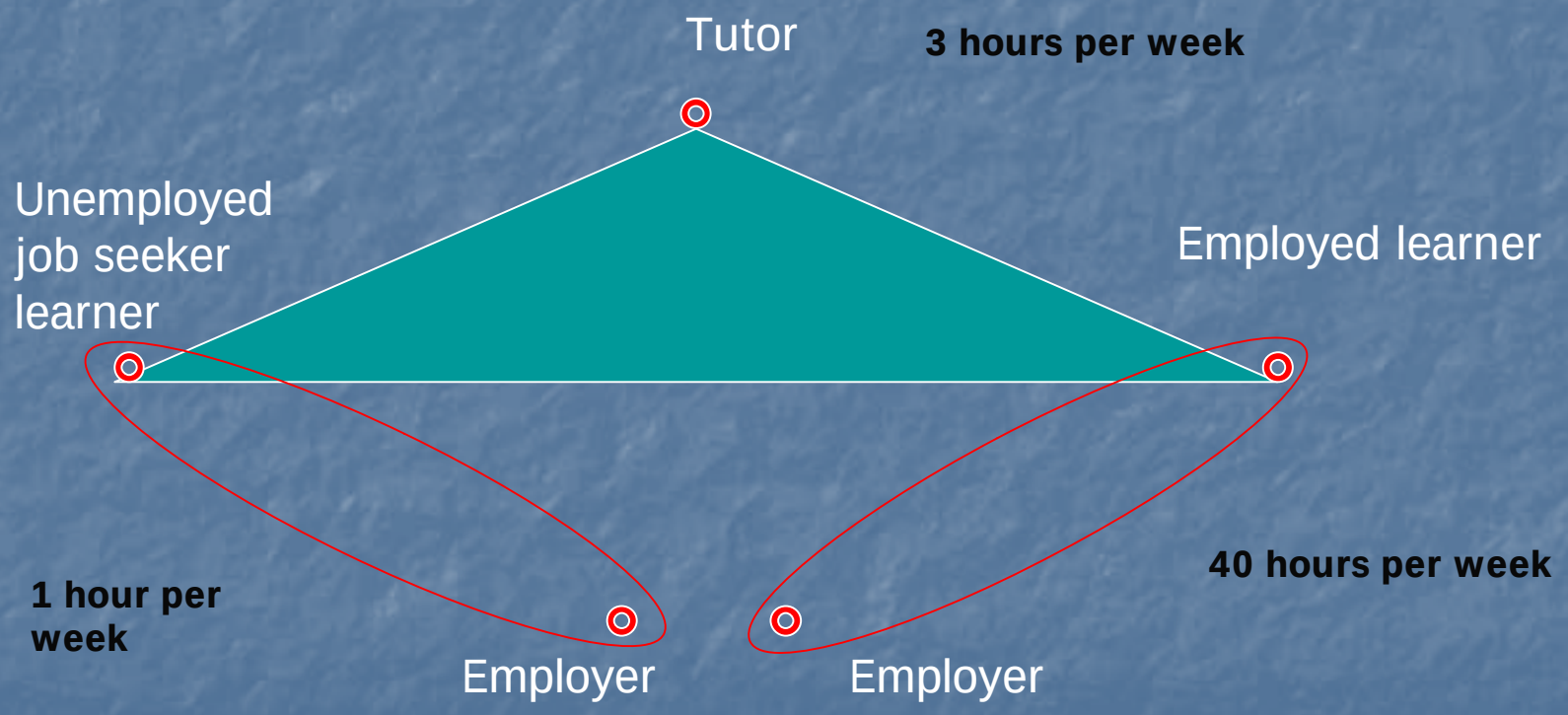
Employability

- The government's 'Skills for Life' strategy was a result of the realisation that poor literacy skills are affecting the economic welfare of the United Kingdom

Definition of Employability

- Employers are best-placed to define what they seek in their (potential) employees, but often do not have a ‘voice’ in the education sector:

The Triangular Learning Partnership (non-workplace learning)



So What Do Employers Actually Want?

- (From research of over 2000 employers)
- 48 attributes were identified
- For successful selection, recruitment and progression in the workplace, employees need to be able to demonstrate these attributes

The ‘Top Ten’ Employability Skills

1. Reliability & consistency	...in their classwork
2. Enthusiasm & interest	...in their learning sessions
3. Willing & able to learn continuously	...during the course
4. Team player	...in terms of other group members
5. Ability to relate to others/ empathy	...with others in the group
6. Common courtesy/ good manners	...to tutor and fellow learners
7. Flexibility & versatility	...in the work they are asked to do
8. Punctuality & attendance	...at all learning sessions
9. Willing and able to take responsibility	...for their learning
10. Written English & reading	...the outcome of their courses

The ‘top 10’ are <u>not</u> all taught skills: they are to do with

Beliefs	Values	Attitudes	Behaviour

So these elements could be described as <u>what a person is like</u>, rather than what they know and have done, to equip them for a specific job

How can tutors adopt employability as a learning context?

In my courses, I try to:

- Ensure that learners are aware of the attributes that employers seek
- Reinforce the criteria by using them as requirements in my own classes
- Use relevant criteria as a vehicle and context (though not as a replacement for the course learning objectives/ qualifications)

Summary

I believe that:

- Teaching within the employability context can be seen as being customer focused on the needs of learners who are seeking to improve their job prospects
- ....and thus helping to address the government's Skills for Life strategy

Question:

What do you currently do (or would like to do) to help your learners to maximise their employability?