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Innovation in the knowledge economy: critical role of eLearning

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Innovation in the knowledge economy: critical role of eLearning

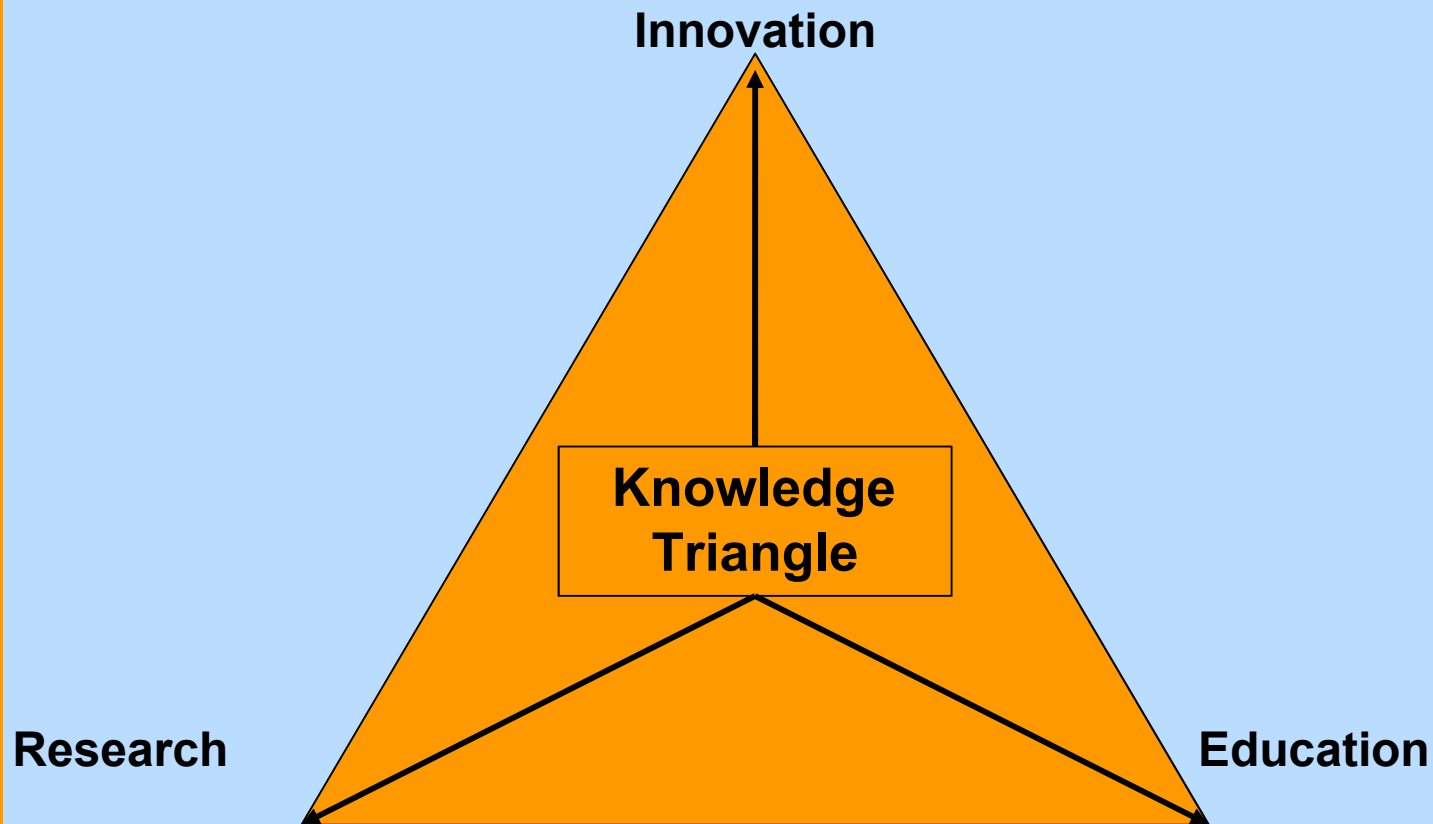
- eLearning has a particular role to play in a knowledge economy. It is more than just an add on
- How to bring new knowledge to the economy? Two examples:
 - ▶ The horizontal model: Co-operation in the area of R&D
 - ▶ Improving skills and experience

The core element of knowledge economies is their ability to innovate their economies and their societies in a permanent way

Innovation is by no means an isolated linear process, but depends on the interplay of numerous actors like companies, research centres, governmental bodies etc. Thereby it facilitates synergies among various policy areas like those for enterprises, education, research and developmental policy.

European Commission's 1995 Green Paper on Innovation COM (1995) 688.

Education and Research are more intensively related to the economy than in the past



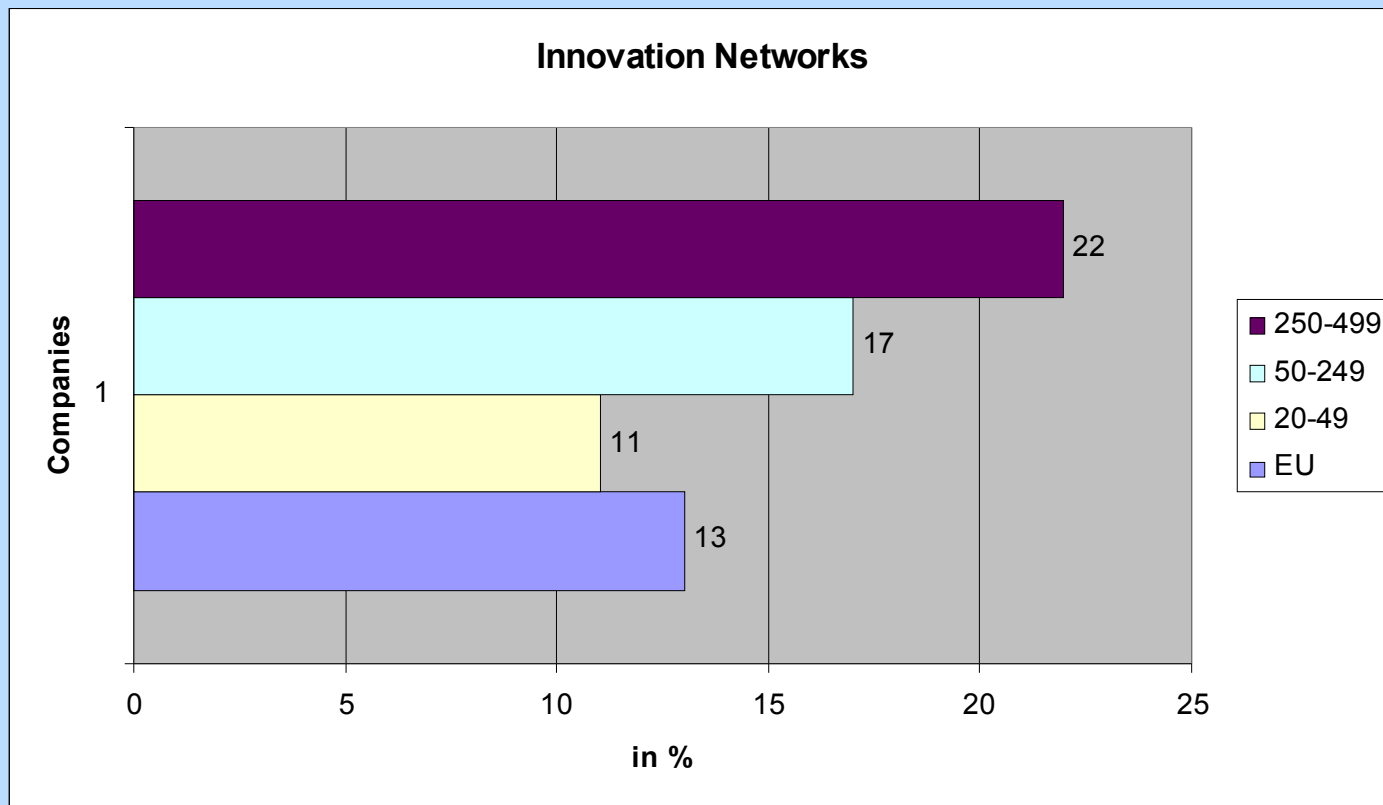
To make the knowledge triangle work: first example

SMEs are the most important contributors to innovation

- How have SMEs access to new knowledge?
- How can eLearning help to facilitate an easy access?

The smaller a firm the less it participates in innovation networks

In the last two years, did your firm participate in an innovation network including other firms, universities, or research institutes?

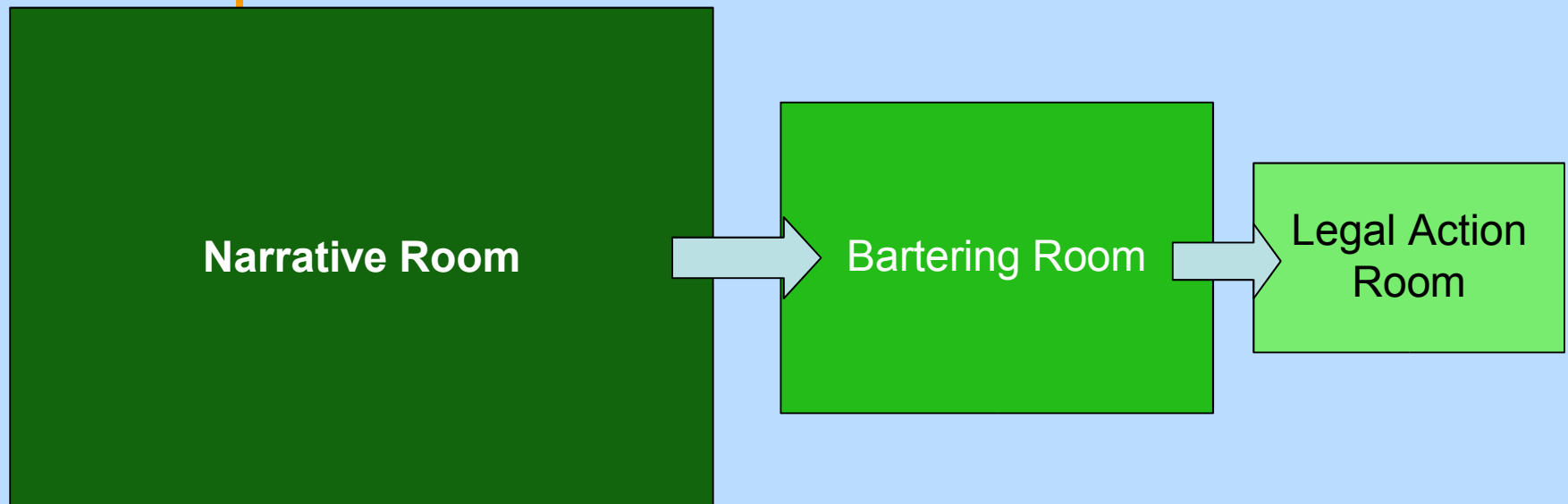


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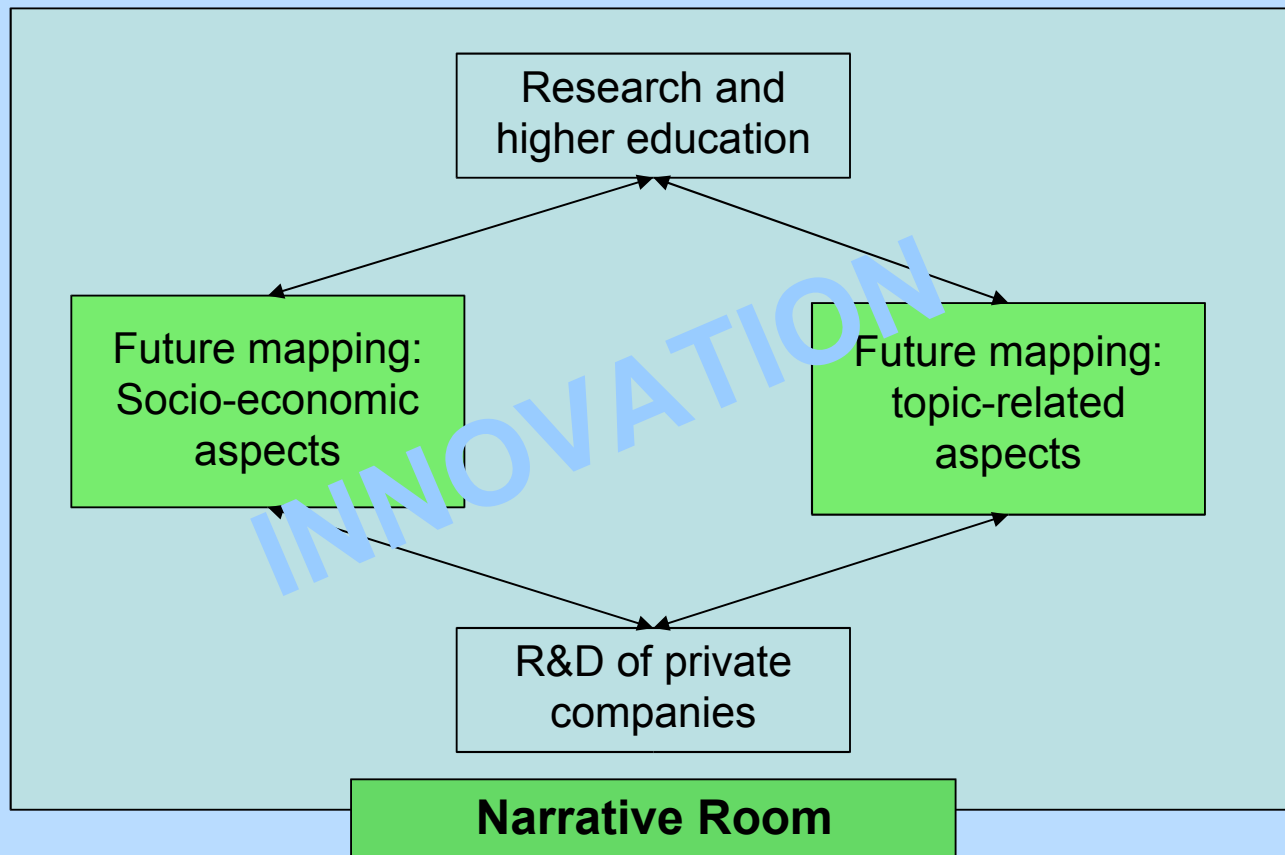
Source: Innobarometer 2004; www.trendchart.org

The trading of symbolic goods like knowledge is a growing market in the knowledge economy

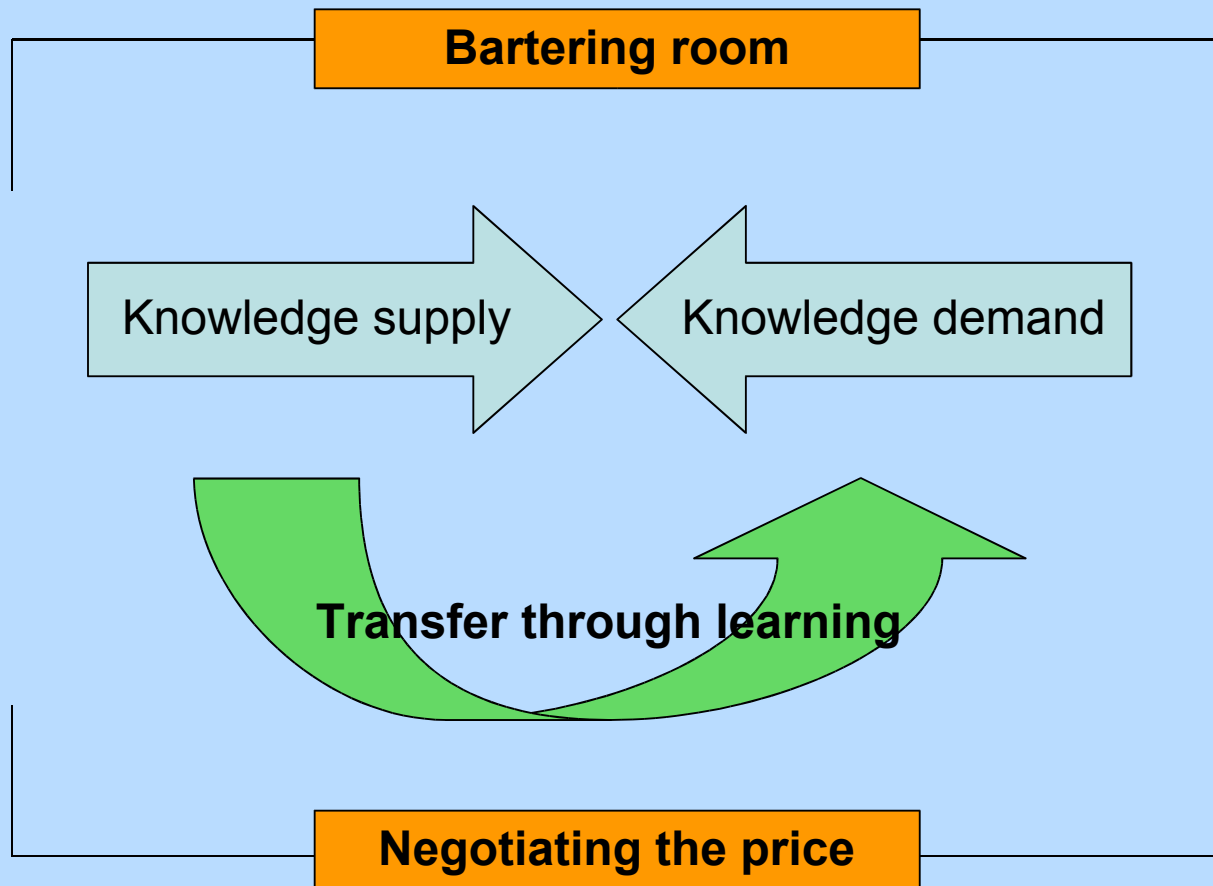
Knowledge can only be transferred by learning



One example of horizontal co-operation to bring the knowledge triangle to work: future mapping



If the term knowledge economy is valid, then knowledge has its price



The new knowledge markets will emerge and rely on eLearning for knowledge acquisition

- The move must be made from an environment in which knowledge is free to one that puts a price on it.
- Pricing knowledge puts a sense of worth on the know-how, insights, and ideas of experts
- This change of mentality will be critical to establishing a knowledge market across borders
- The adequate tool to create transnational markets is eLearning
- Unless this occurs, knowledge access for SMEs will take place only by chance.

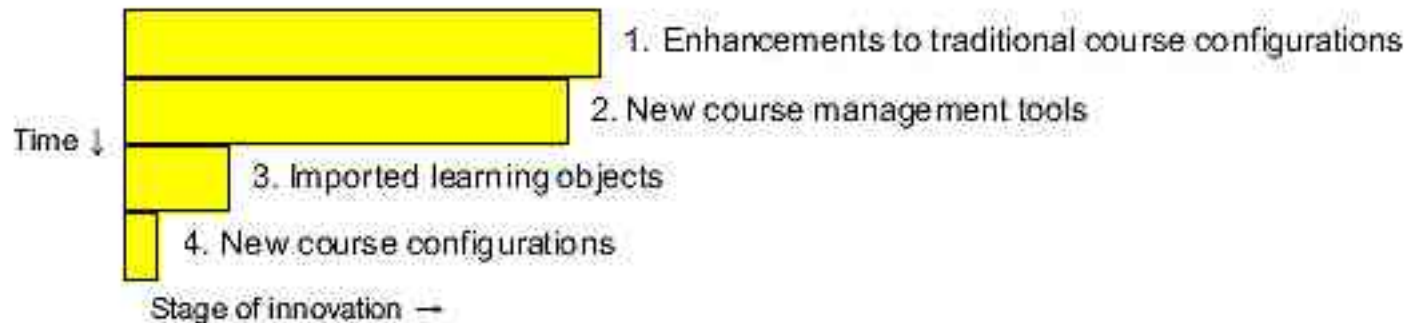
To make the knowledge triangle work: second example

In a knowledge economy we need a wider range of skills for knowledge acquisition and distribution

- The way we have experienced learning in our early childhood and youth influences our attitude towards learning for the rest of our life
- To explain the advantages of eLearning is one thing – to experience them is another one

The exploitation of the new ICTs for teaching and learning is very limited in a traditional environment

Figure 1b. e-learning's Adoption Cycles



Source: Robert Zemsky & William F. Massy: Thwarted Innovation, 2004, p. 11

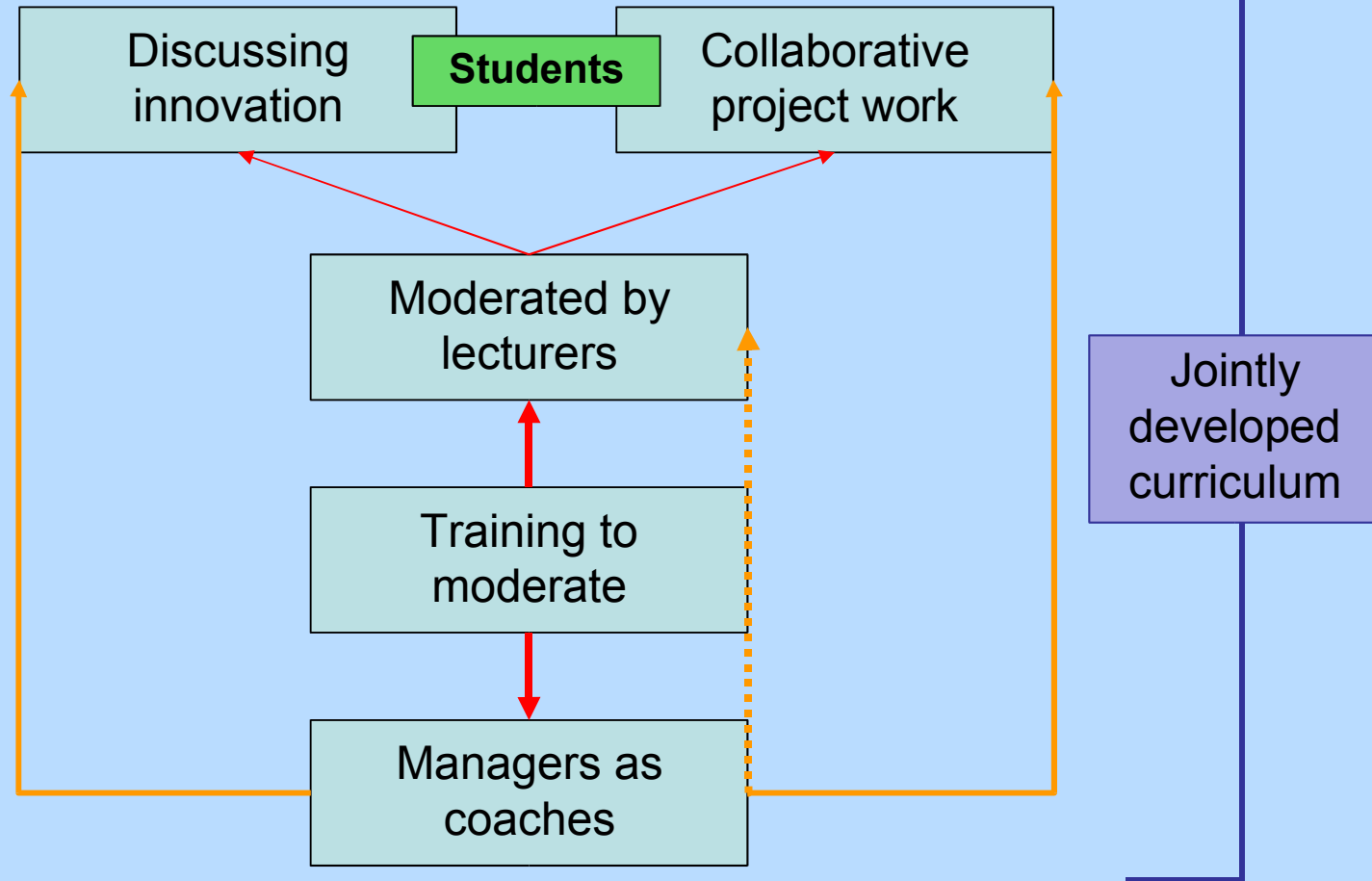
The economy expects training and highly qualified graduates from higher education institutions

You stated that you received public support for Which of these was the most valuable to your firm? Firstly? Secondly? Public support for...			
EU 25	Firstly	Secondly	Total (Firstly & Secondly)
Training your staff to improve your firm's ability to innovate	51%	26%	77%
Introducing new or significantly improved processes	44%	24%	68%
Carrying out in-house research or research contracted out to other organisations	35%	24%	59%
Collaborating on innovation with other firms, universities or research institutes	32%	28%	59%
Hiring new graduates for your innovation activities	29%	33%	62%
Conducting market research for introducing new products or services	27%	24%	51%
Advice services for innovation activities	21%	33%	54%
Helping an innovation network in which you participated	21%	33%	54%

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Improving skills and experience: The iCOLL approach - integrating actual managers into higher education by eLearning



In a knowledge economy we have to go beyond the usual understanding of knowledge acquisition: Knowledge has become a valuable good

- A knowledge economy needs to activate all possible ways of knowledge acquisition to facilitate innovation
- Knowledge acquisition and knowledge transfer are based on learning
- The adequate usage of eLearning has to be trained
- eLearning can be a very powerful tool to develop markets for highly innovative knowledge
- eLearning is a crucial skill to survive in a knowledge economy

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