

# Deloitte Research Alignment with Maine Maritime Academy's and Texas A&M Maritime Academy's M.O.S.T. Program Model

Strategic Analysis:

How the M.O.S.T. Six-Week Rapid Skills Welding Training  
Model Operationalizes Deloitte's Workforce  
Modernization Principles and America's Talent Strategy  
for the Golden Age

March 2026

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## Executive Summary

*Deloitte's extensive research describes a future demanding rapid, outcome-based, skills-focused, and agile training pipelines. Independent research shows traditional institutions serve local markets within a 10–25 mile radius and produce graduates who overwhelmingly remain near where they trained.*

*The Crisis Brief documents a welding crisis of historic proportions: 454,500 welders supporting the entire manufacturing sector, with over half about to retire at the exact moment shipbuilding, infrastructure, grid expansion, and energy demand require hundreds of thousands more. The Crisis Brief concludes: "We cannot continue to do the same old programs."*

*The Military Outreach Service Teams (M.O.S.T.) Rapid Skills Welding Training model stands out as a uniquely powerful response:*

- *It taps "the finest hidden workforce in the nation" — an unlimited, renewable pipeline of 200,000+ transitioning soldiers annually, 80% under 25, with decades of productive career ahead.*
- *It offers accelerated, employer-customized training achieving American Welding Society (AWS) certification in six weeks at ~20% of traditional cost, with a proven track record of 800+ welder graduates.*
- *It is — in the Crisis Brief's words — "the only model that can recruit and train onsite nationally and deploy welders throughout the U.S. specifically where they are needed," unconstrained by the geographic limitations that permanently anchor community college graduates within 50 miles of campus.*
- *It solves the "double gap" of skills AND work ethic simultaneously: military service pre-screens for the behavioral attributes that 80%+ of manufacturers say civilian candidates lack.*
- *It "removes every single negative factor" facing transitioning soldiers: providing a committed job before training, full salary and benefits day one after discharge, and a 30-month career ladder.*

**M.O.S.T. is not just a training program. It is a national workforce deployment system to address the country's welding crisis in military and commercial enterprises. M.O.S.T. rapidly trains and places welders into specific critical areas where they are needed the most.**

# 1. The National Welding and Manufacturing Crisis

## Welding: The Core of Manufacturing Under Threat

The Crisis Brief (*America's Welding Workforce Crisis: The Critical Need for an Accelerated Focused Welding Skills Training Program*) opens with an unambiguous warning: "The United States is facing an unprecedented national crisis in welding capacity that will cripple its entire manufacturing sector." The brief documents:

- Approximately **454,500 welders** currently support the nation's manufacturing backbone
- Projections by DOL, AWS, Red-D-Arc indicate a **massive loss of over HALF** of this workforce in 2-3 years
- **300,000+ new welders** needed just to backfill retirement losses
- An **additional 200,000+ welders** needed for four major national initiatives
- "National welding capacity will be halved when it should be doubled to meet immediate production needs"
- The aging workforce, "predominantly from the baby boomer generation, is reaching its apex in retirement age much faster than they can be replaced"
- This will create "the largest shortfall in welding capacity since WWII"



## The Big 4: Demand Accelerators

The Crisis Brief identifies four concurrent national initiatives compounding retirement losses into a "perfect storm":

### Initiative 1 — U.S. Navy and Merchant Shipbuilding

- HII: "since 2020 has spent **\$450 million in training**"
- U.S. Navy: **11 years' worth of delays** across four critical programs
- "There is not one shipyard or manufacturing supply chain that is not short of welders today"

## Initiative 2 — National Infrastructure

- **\$480 billion** funding for 60,000+ projects
- **\$5 billion Large Bridge Project Award** affecting 13 bridges in 16 states

## Initiative 3 — Doubling Grid Size

- **47,300 gigawatt-miles** of new power lines by 2035 = **57% expansion**
- Trinity, Sabre, and Valmont are "already short thousands of welders"

## Initiative 4 — Oil Field Welding Demand

- Jobs "will pay nearly **triple existing salary levels**" draining talent from other sectors



## Manufacturing: A Multi-Million Worker Deficit

Deloitte & MI, 2024 ([Full Report](#)):

*"The net need for new manufacturing employees could reach 3.8 million between 2024 and 2033. Roughly half—1.9 million—could remain unfilled."*

Deloitte & MI, 2018 ([Full Report](#)):

- Projected **2.4 million unfilled positions** (2018–2028)
- **\$454 billion of manufacturing GDP at risk** by 2028

## 2. The M.O.S.T. Model: Design and Mechanisms

The Crisis Brief describes the Rapid Skills Welding Training model as "a revolutionary approach to address the dual challenges of a national welding shortage and the difficulties faced by transitioning military personnel." A precursor initiative "successfully trained over 1,400 welders and machinists across multiple states."



### Target Population: A Hidden Ready Workforce

The Crisis Brief identifies the target population as "the finest hidden workforce in the nation":

- **Over 200,000 soldiers** transition annually, **over 64,000 in the Army alone**
- **80% are under 25; 40% are married** with little transferable civilian skill sets
- Mostly from infantry, armored, or quartermaster departments — the "high risk" group
- Per Pew Research: **44% of post-9/11 veterans** report difficulties transitioning

### The Core Crisis: Discharge to Meaningful Work

**Crisis Brief:** "The time period between discharge and meaningful work is the real enemy of transitioning soldiers and their families."

JAMA Psychiatry (2015): "Individuals with less than 4 years of service had an increased rate of suicide."  
The VA confirms veterans are "most vulnerable in the first three months following separation."

Veterans Crisis Line data shows it had **about 3.8 million customer interactions** from fiscal year 2021 through 2024, with the number increasing each year.

### Pre-Committed Employment

"This program will not be offered to any student without a company's prior commitment for employment as a full-time welder upon successful completion of the program." **Every graduate has a job commitment before training begins and can begin work on day one after discharge.**

### Six-Week On-Base Training

- State-of-the-art virtual welder for initial screening and acceleration
- Live welding in OSHA-approved labs on/near military bases
- Training **customized to employer-specific machines, rods, plate sizes, feed rates**
- Culminates in **American Welding Society (AWS) certification** while soldier retains full military pay

## Post-Placement Development

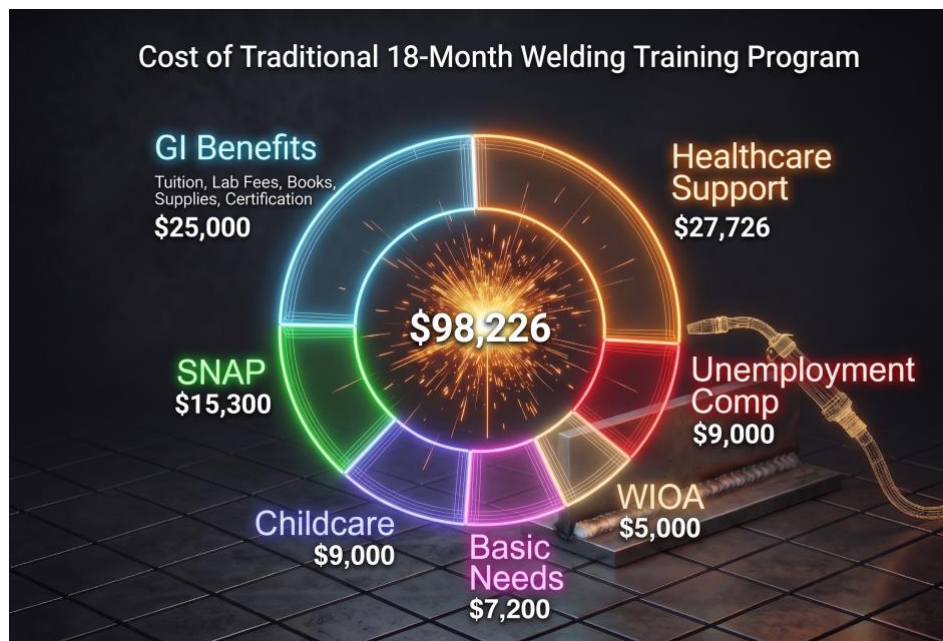
**30-month structured OJT and e-learning** advancing to complex weld types and supervisory roles are provided by employers.

## Background of M.O.S.T.

Military Outreach Service Teams (M.O.S.T.) is a national logistics provider that specializes in complete and comprehensive turnkey training sites serving community colleges, industrial outreach providers, grant awardees as well as private training organizations. M.O.S.T. offers support on demand of all necessary equipment, training modules, engineering services, consulting, and customized capabilities on selected geographic sites. M.O.S.T. has extensive experience in deploying and providing logistics support of this kind in over a dozen states for DOL and DOC grantees for civilian outreach since 2010.

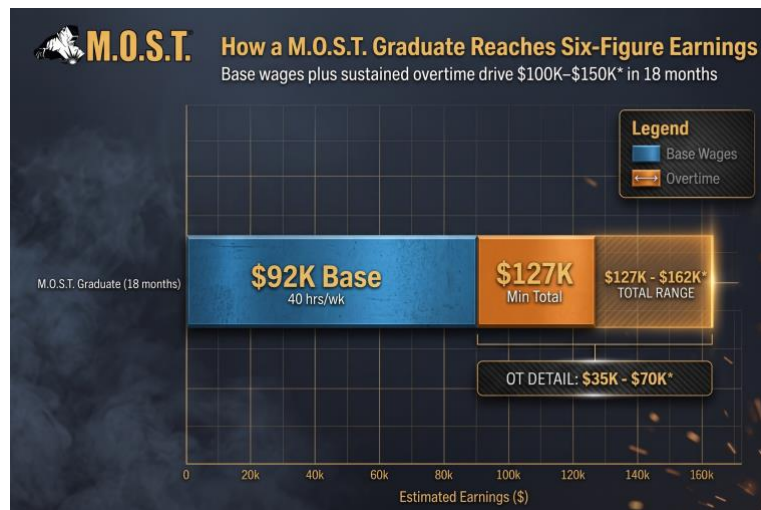
## Cost, ROI, and Economic Impact

The Crisis Brief's cost analysis already shows that the M.O.S.T. model delivers outcomes at a fraction of the cost of traditional pathways. All-in, the six-week program totals approximately **\$20,000 per student**, compared with **\$80,000–\$100,000** for a traditional 18-month welding pathway that relies on social programs (SNAP, unemployment compensation), tuition support, and extended periods without full-time earnings. This means M.O.S.T. operates at roughly **20% of the traditional cost** while delivering a fully certified, production-ready welder in locations where they are critically needed.



From the taxpayer perspective, this structure produces rapid and measurable return on investment. At a \$20,000 per-student cost and a \$100,000–\$150,000 wage trajectory over 18 months, income and payroll tax receipts, reduced reliance on social programs, and elimination of UCX unemployment payments mean the public sector can realistically **recover its entire program cost within 12–18 months**, then benefit from a high-earning, highly productive taxpayer for decades thereafter. The M.O.S.T. model therefore improves both sides of the ledger: it **cuts training cost by roughly 80%** while also simultaneously **multiplying early-career earnings** and compressing the time from discharge to meaningful work.

\*Estimated range based on typical overtime patterns (10–20 hours per week at time-and-a-half) in pole plants and shipyards.



### Why the Traditional Model Fails Our National Goal of Rapidly Placing Welders Where They Are Critically Needed

- "No assurances your training will result in a job—high anxiety"
- "Long periods without meaningful income—financial burden, family stress"
- "Many families forced on welfare—depression, self-worth"
- "General training forcing companies to refuse to hire if not production-ready day one"
- "18-month program, zero actual industry work experience"

**Crisis Brief:** "The accelerated onsite six-week training model removes every single negative factor."

## 3. Deloitte Themes Aligned With M.O.S.T.

### Outcome-Based Learning

Deloitte's *The Future of Learning in Government* ([Full Report](#)):

*"[FCRA] screened ~1,500 applicants and trained 25 participants. 100% achieved industry-standard certifications in just three months."*

**Alignment:** M.O.S.T. uses VR screening and compressed training for AWS certification + employer-defined production tasks. Precursor: 800+ welders trained.

### Skills-Focused Personalization

Deloitte's *The Skills-Based Organization* ([Full Report](#)):

*"Skills are emerging as the new currency in the labor market."*

**Alignment:** M.O.S.T. customizes "welding machines, rod characteristics, plate sizes, material components, temperatures and feed rates" to each employer's specific needs.

## Multimodal Training and VR

Deloitte: VR reduced Air Force training by 2 months; welder training by 50-60% ([Full Report](#), [2024 Study](#)).

**Alignment:** Crisis Brief: "beginning with a state-of-the-art virtual welder, training progresses to live OSHA-approved labs." Exact VR→live progression Deloitte recommends.

## Modular Learning

Deloitte's *Rethinking the Workforce Ecosystem* ([Full Report](#)) advocates modular formats.

**Alignment:** Phase 1 = 6-week AWS cert + employment; Phase 2 = 30-month OJT ladder. AWS = portable, nationally recognized credential.

## Skills-Based Talent Systems

Deloitte's defense research ([Fighting for the Future](#), [Future-Ready Military](#)): "Who militaries recruit today... has direct impacts downstream."

**Alignment:** M.O.S.T. translates military behavioral attributes into civilian skills profiles, extending defense workforce into the civilian industrial base.

## 4. Differentiator #1: Unlimited, Recurring Pipeline

**Deloitte 2018** ([Full Report](#)): "Manufacturers' access to new workers is limited."

**Deloitte 2025** ([Full Report](#)): "Talent pipelines are likely to wither."

**M.O.S.T.:** "200,000+ soldiers transition annually" — "a large, highly-talented motivated workforce available year after year." 80% under 25, decades of career ahead. Unlike programs limited to a 10–25 mile radius, M.O.S.T. taps a mandatory, recurring national outflow, trains at military bases onsite, and places welders nationally where they are critically needed.

## 5. Differentiator #2: The "Double Gap" (Skills + Work Ethic)

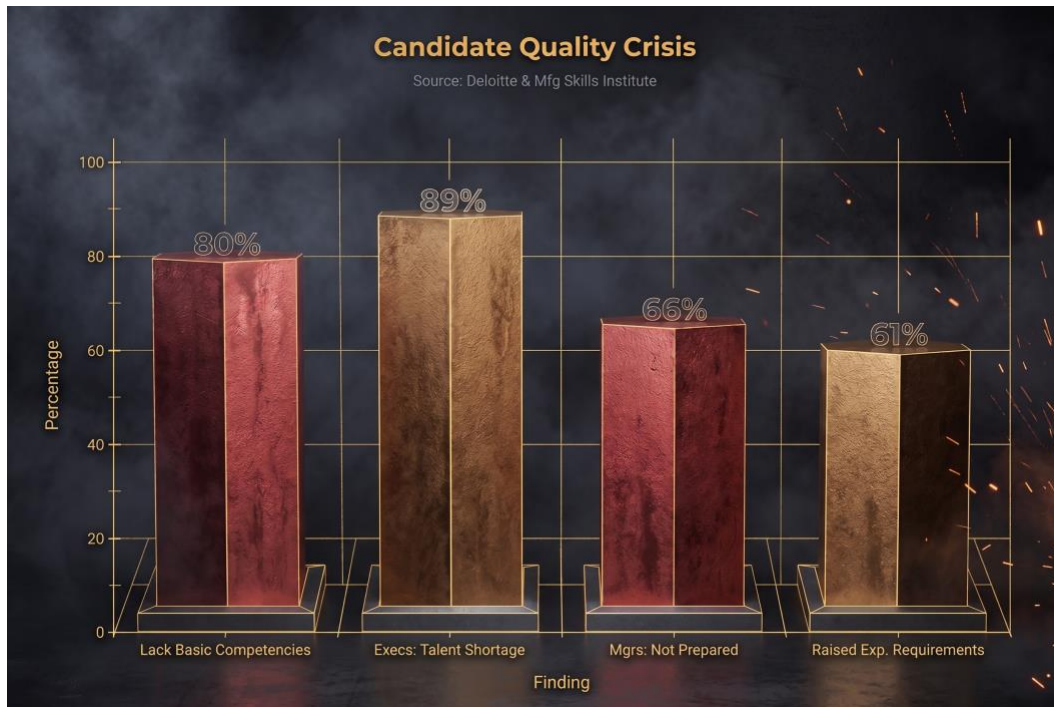
### The Candidate Quality Crisis

**Deloitte 2018** ([Full Report](#)):

*"We don't have enough job candidates with the right skills AND WORK ETHIC."*

**Mfg Skills Institute 2025:** "Over 80% of manufacturers confirmed candidates lack basic competencies."

**Deloitte 2025** ([Full Report](#)): 66% of managers say hires "not fully prepared." 61% raised experience requirements.



### Military Service as Pre-Screening

*"Veterans' skills easily translate to manufacturing careers. They practice teamwork, they are problem solvers, and they are proven leaders." — Carolyn Lee, MI Executive Director*

**M.O.S.T.'s six-week timeline works because** military service pre-screens for punctuality, teamwork, stress tolerance, physical endurance — M.O.S.T. only adds the **technical welding skill**. "The finest hidden workforce in the nation."

## 6. Differentiator #3: Targeted National Deployment vs. Localized Placement

**The single most important strategic difference.** Crisis Brief: "The only model that can recruit and train onsite nationally (with a pre-committed job) and deploy welders throughout the U.S. to specific key manufacturing sites where welders are critically needed."

### The Geographic Mismatch

**Deloitte 2022** ([Full Report](#)): "Even with higher pay, manufacturers are finding it difficult to fill a position that requires relocation."

**Deloitte 2026** ([Full Report](#)): "30% of OEMs would reshore if workforce had higher skills and abundant supply."

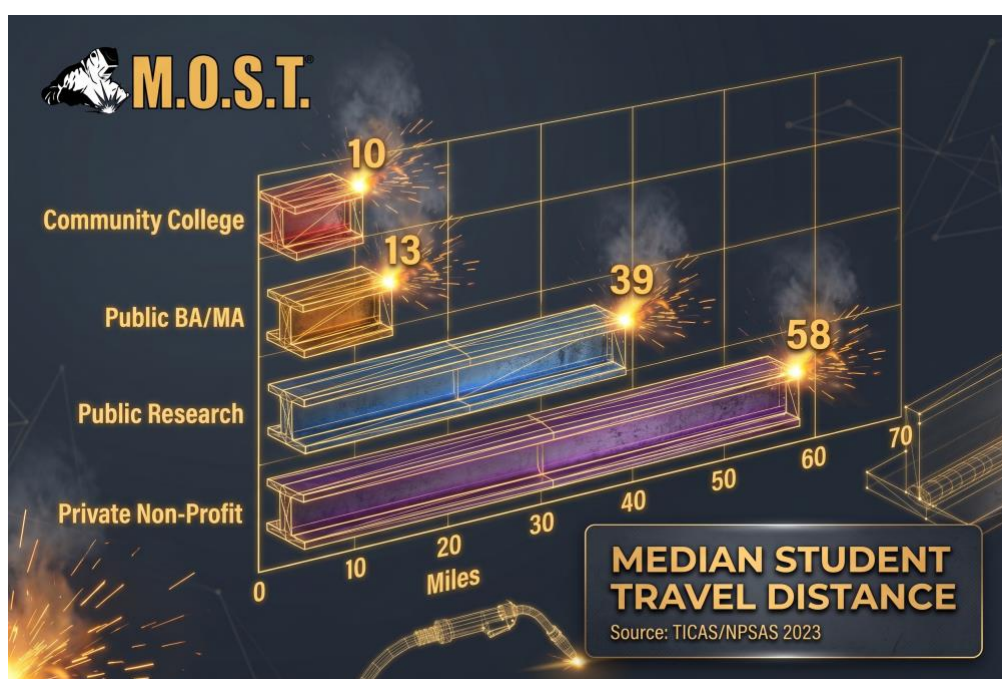
**Mfg Institute 2023:** 65.3% of rural manufacturers cite "difficulty attracting employees" as #1 challenge.



## Community Colleges Are Hyper-Local

**TICAS 2023:** Community college median = 10 miles; 79% within 25 miles; 89% within 50 miles.

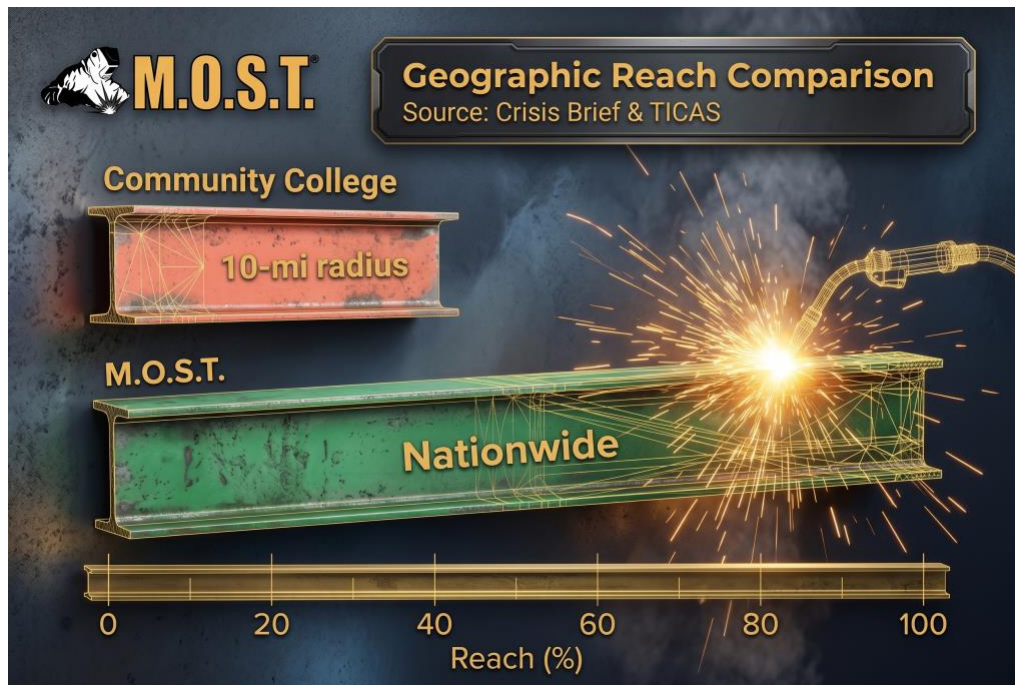
| Institution Type   | Median Distance | % Within 25 mi | % Within 50 mi |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Community College  | 10 miles        | 79%            | 89%            |
| Public BA/MA       | 13 miles        | 67%            | 79%            |
| Public Research    | 39 miles        | 42%            | 54%            |
| Private Non-Profit | 58 miles        | 36%            | 47%            |
| All Undergrads     | 17 miles        | 57%            | 69%            |



## Where Graduates Work

**Emsi 2021:** 61% of CC graduates stay within 50 miles. **UCLA 2023:** 65% chose CC "to stay close to home."

**Handshake 2025:** Location now #1 factor above salary.



## M.O.S.T. as a National Deployment Model

The Crisis Brief states: "Traditional training models are unable to produce focused welding talent with customized training for specific industries over a wide geographic area, as the six-week program has successfully achieved." It further notes that traditional programs "are geographically restricted when placement needs are national in scope."

This geographic reality shows up most clearly in remote or specialized industrial hubs. It is effectively impossible, for example, to staff locations like Alvarado, Texas with three or four thousand welders using only local tech schools and community colleges. Those institutions draw from a limited commuter radius, and their graduates overwhelmingly stay close to home. The M.O.S.T. model, by contrast, can deliberately target and supply a steady stream of talent to such sites—on the order of fifty welders per month—because training is customized to employer requirements and graduates are selected specifically for their willingness to relocate. Transitioning soldiers and their families are actively planning their next move months before discharge; securing meaningful work in a new geographic location is expected, not a barrier. M.O.S.T. aligns that built-in mobility with national industrial needs: our graduates go to the work, while traditional workforce training graduates tend to stay near the training site.

M.O.S.T. operates with zero geographic constraints:

- Soldiers must relocate after discharge—no fixed civilian address ties them down.
- They are accustomed to PCSing (permanent changes of station) throughout their military careers.
- The "high risk" candidates (80% under 25, many single) are the most geographically mobile population.

- M.O.S.T. “can train onsite at any military facility” and match candidates to employers nationally before training.
- Guaranteed employment + high wages + full benefits + career ladder = the incentive to move where civilian candidates refuse.
- The Crisis Brief: “Soldiers can begin earning full-time salary and benefits day one after discharge” at whatever location the employer requires.

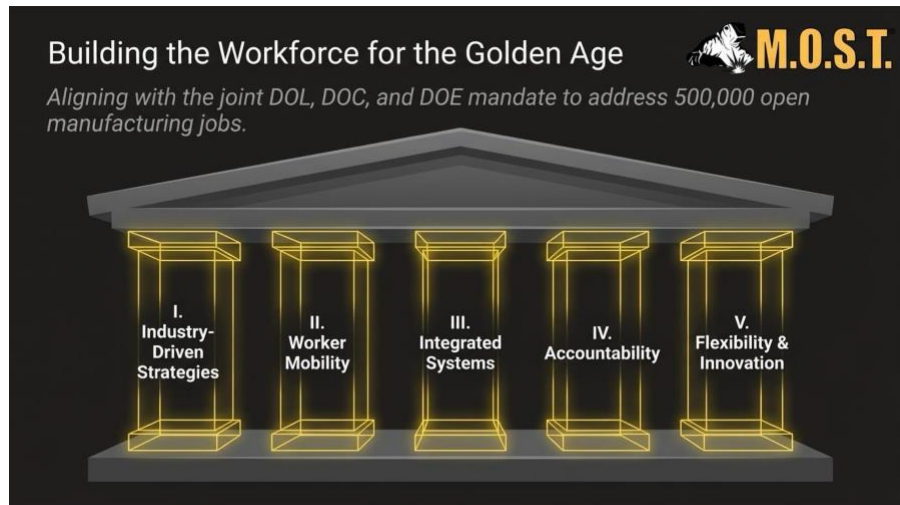
## 7. Alignment Matrix: Deloitte vs. M.O.S.T.

| Deloitte Principle            | Evidence                                | M.O.S.T. Mechanism                              | vs. Traditional               |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Outcome-based</b>          | FCRA: 100% certs in 3mo                 | AWS cert + employer tasks; 1,400+ trained       | Targeted vs. generic          |
| <b>Skills personalization</b> | "Skills = new currency"                 | Customized machines, rods, plates, feed rates   | Employer-specific vs. general |
| <b>Multimodal/VR</b>          | VR cut training 2mo; welding 50-60%     | VR screening → live OSHA labs                   | Integrated VR at scale        |
| <b>Modular credentials</b>    | Portable skill records                  | 6-wk AWS + 30-mo OJT ladder                     | Two-phase stackable           |
| <b>Pipeline health</b>        | 3.8M needed; pipelines "wither"         | 200K+ soldiers/yr; 64K+ Army                    | Unlimited recurring pool      |
| <b>Candidate quality</b>      | 80%+ lack basics; work ethic crisis     | Military-conditioned; "finest hidden workforce" | Pre-screened readiness        |
| <b>Geographic mobility</b>    | Can't fill rural "even with higher pay" | "Only model" national; train at any base        | 100% deployable vs. 10mi      |

## 8. M.O.S.T.’s Alignment With America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age

In 2025, the U.S. Departments of Labor, Commerce, and Education jointly released *America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age*, declaring: "President Trump has set a bold economic strategy to reindustrialize America." It acknowledges: **"For manufacturers alone, there are close to 500,000 open jobs today—a number expected to quadruple."**

The strategy rests on **five strategic pillars**. **M.O.S.T. is perhaps the single most complete existing embodiment of all five.** No other program simultaneously delivers industry-driven customized training, veteran workforce mobility, integrated single-provider services, measurable accountability, and innovative VR-accelerated rapid reskilling — all at national scale.



### Pillar I — Industry-Driven Strategies

*Talent Strategy:* "A paradigm shift... to move beyond the 'train and pray' model." Requires "pathways with **job guarantees or mechanisms that ensure training leads directly to employment.**" Priority industries: **"shipbuilding, advanced manufacturing, energy production."**

**M.O.S.T.:** The antithesis of "train and pray." Employers commit to hiring before training; curriculum customized to employer specifications; graduates produce on day one. Serves the exact priority industries named.

### Pillar II — Worker Mobility

*Talent Strategy:* "The 'college-for-all approach' has failed." Calls for "credentials of value," "virtual reality tools," and explicitly **"workforce strategies that strengthen transitions for veterans."**

**M.O.S.T.:** Moves 200,000+ veterans annually from "disconnected" to "employed" in six weeks. AWS = nationally portable credential. VR-first methodology. 30-month career ladder for advancement.

### Pillar III — Integrated Systems

*Talent Strategy:* "Replace fragmented programs with a streamlined, coordinated system." Programs have "incompatible rules, siloed data systems, and duplicative requirements."

**M.O.S.T.:** Single turnkey provider: recruit → VR screen → employer match → train → certify → place → 30-month development. Zero handoffs between agencies. One integrated system from first contact to career advancement.

### Pillar IV — Accountability

*Talent Strategy:* "Reform or eliminate ineffective programs." Benchmark: **"Job Corps is a failed experiment"** costing **"more than \$400,000 per graduate."**

**M.O.S.T.:** \$20,000 all-in (**5% of Job Corps cost**). 100% committed employment. ROI in 12–18 months. 100,000+ earnings within 18 months. 3,000+ hours experience. Eliminates UCX payments.

Pillar V — Flexibility & Innovation

Talent Strategy: "DARPA-style experimentation models to test bold new ideas." "Faster feedback loops between employers, educators, and training providers."

M.O.S.T.: Six-week timeline = DARPA-style disruption of 18-month paradigm. VR screening. Curriculum adapts per employer. Deployable to any military base nationally. 800+ proven certified welder graduates — validated, scaled innovation.

Pillar-by-Pillar Alignment Summary

| Talent Strategy Pillar  | Federal Mandate                                          | M.O.S.T. Delivers                                                          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I: Industry-Driven      | Job guarantees; employer-led; shipbuilding, mfg, energy  | Pre-committed employment; customized curriculum; exact priority industries |
| II: Worker Mobility     | Veterans pathways; VR/AI; credentials of value           | 200K+ vets/yr; VR + AWS cert; 30-mo career ladder                          |
| III: Integrated Systems | Replace fragmented programs; single access point         | Single turnkey: recruit → certify → place → develop                        |
| IV: Accountability      | ROI; reform Job Corps (\$400K/grad); pay-for-performance | \$20K (5% of Job Corps); 100% employment; ROI 12-18mo                      |
| V: Flexibility          | Rapid reskilling; DARPA experimentation; VR tech         | 6-week model; VR at scale; 1,400+ proven; any base                         |

The Talent Strategy concludes: "These reforms will arm American businesses with the skilled workers they need." M.O.S.T. delivers on every element — today, at scale.

9. Implications for DoD, TAP Reform, and Funding

Measurement

Outcome-based evaluation: employment/retention at 6/12/24 months, wage growth vs. TAP baselines. Precursor: 800+ welders trained.

Defense Industrial Base

NDIS (Jan 2024) + Crisis Brief Big 4 = welders as critical bottleneck. M.O.S.T. = named pipeline for defense-critical roles.

Funding Rationale

\$20K vs. \$80K–\$100K traditional; 100% ROI in 12–18 months; eliminates UCX. Talent Strategy calls for redirecting funding from Job Corps (\$400K+/graduate) to proven models.

Complement, Not Replace

CC and tech schools remain vital locally. M.O.S.T. = strategic overlay for national bottlenecks: shipyards, grid, infrastructure, defense industrial base.

## 10. Conclusion

This report demonstrates that M.O.S.T. occupies a unique position at the convergence of three mandates: Deloitte's workforce research, the Crisis Brief's welding capacity emergency, and the federal *America's Talent Strategy for the Golden Age*.

All three independently conclude the same: pipelines will "wither," "college-for-all has failed," and "we cannot continue the same old programs." All call for industry-driven, outcome-based, skills-focused, geographically unconstrained, and accountable training systems.

**M.O.S.T. does not merely align — it is the operational proof these mandates can be executed.** Where Deloitte identifies principles, M.O.S.T. delivers mechanisms. Where the Crisis Brief documents the crisis, M.O.S.T. provides the solution. Where the Talent Strategy sets policy, M.O.S.T. offers validated implementation.

The strategic case:

- 454,500 welders with over half retiring, compounded by the Big 4 demand surge
- Traditional programs: geographically locked, 18 months, 5× cost, no employment guarantees
- Military transition: 200,000+ annually, pre-screened, geographically mobile, young, ready
- M.O.S.T.: certified, employed welders in 6 weeks at \$20K with 100% ROI — in priority industries

**M.O.S.T. is not a proposal for future reform. It is a proven system ready for immediate federal partnership — serving the industries, workers, and national security interests all three mandates demand.**

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