Optimizing Network Performance in Distributed Machine Learning

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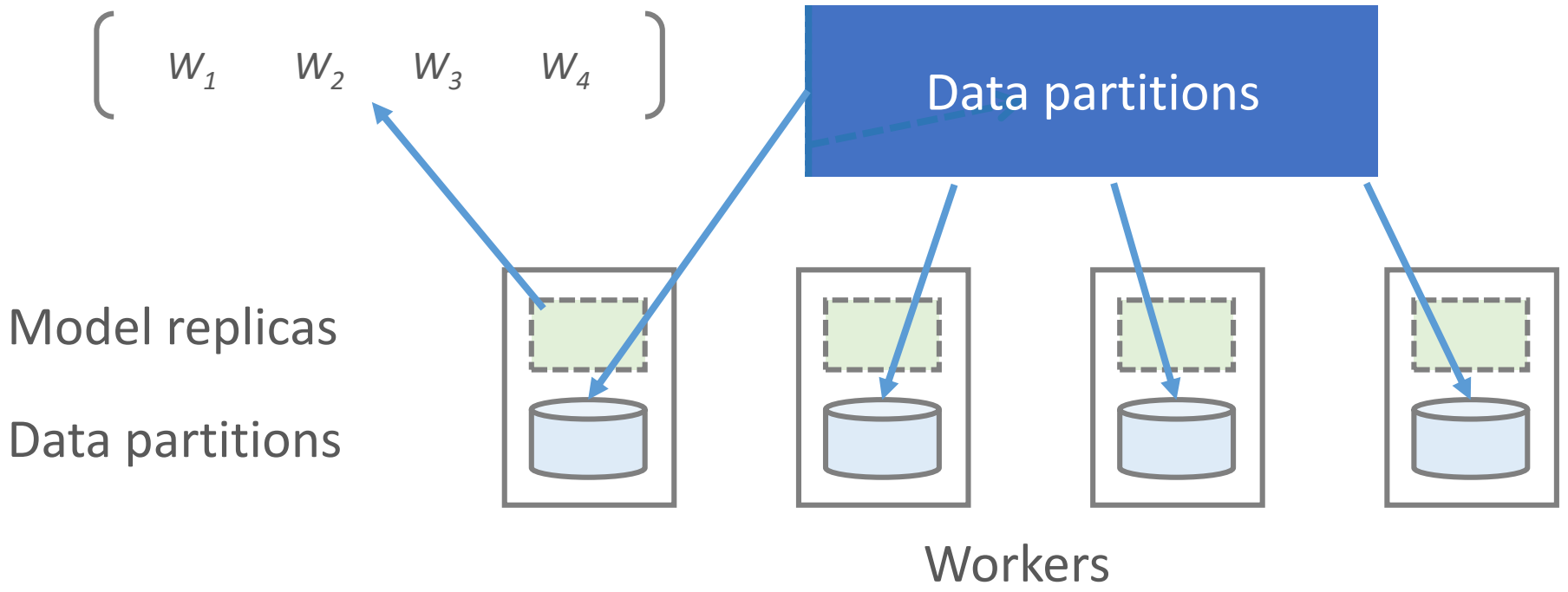
Machine Learning

- Successful in many fields
  - Online advertisement
  - Spam filtering
  - Fraud detection
  - Image recognition
  - …
- One of the most important workloads in data centers

Industry Scale Machine Learning

- More data, higher accuracy
- Scales of industry problems
  - 100 Billions samples, 1TBs – 1PBs data
  - 10 Billions parameters, 1GBs – 1TBs data
- Distributed execution
  - 100s – 1000s machines

Distributed Machine Learning



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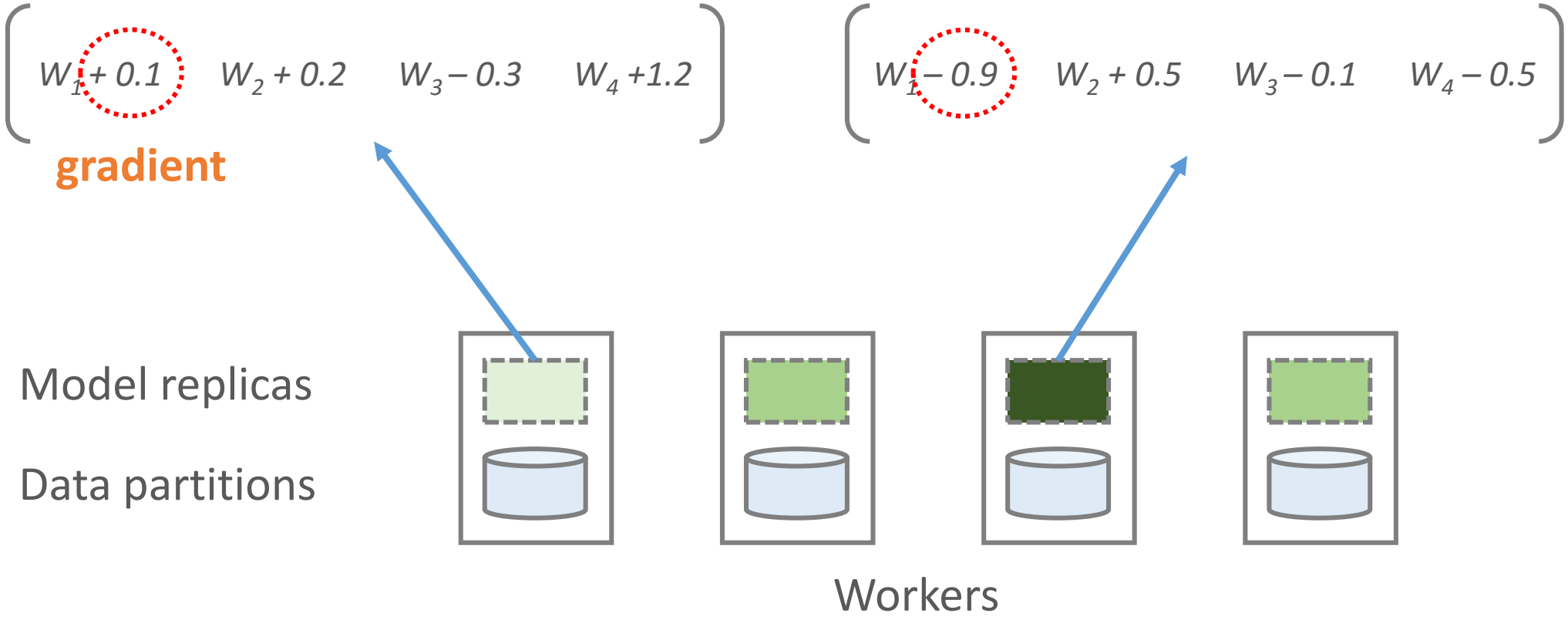

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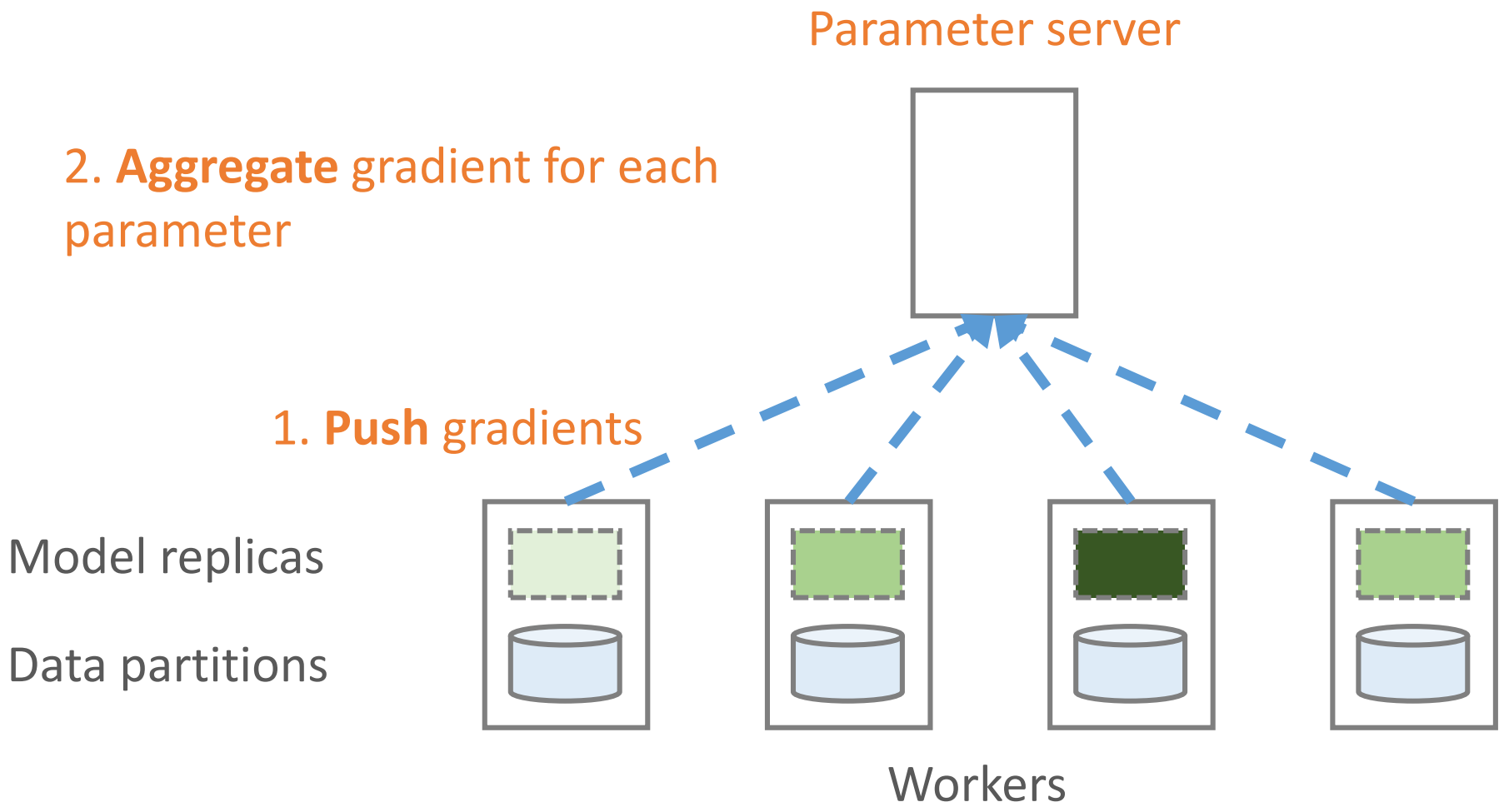

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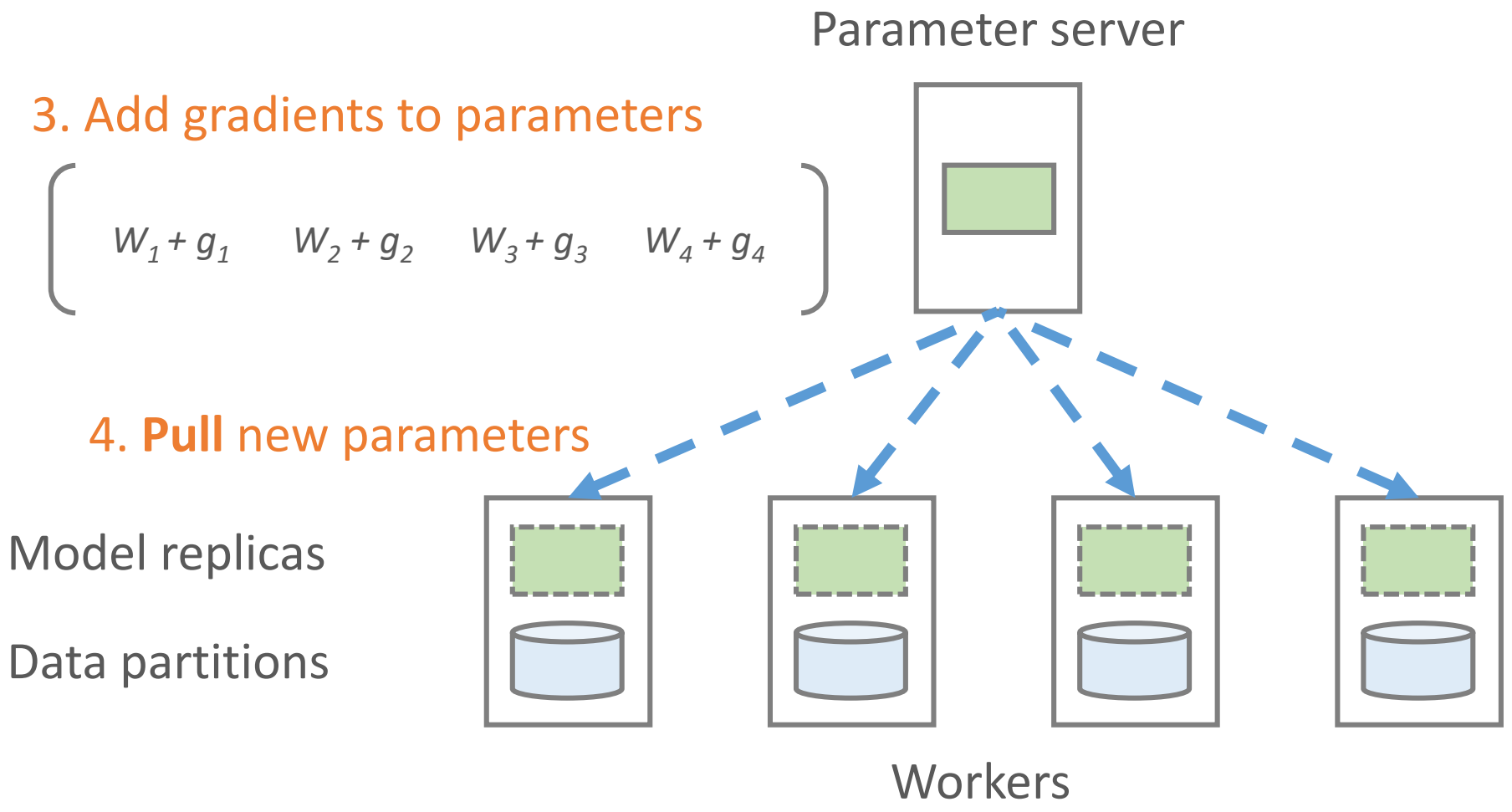
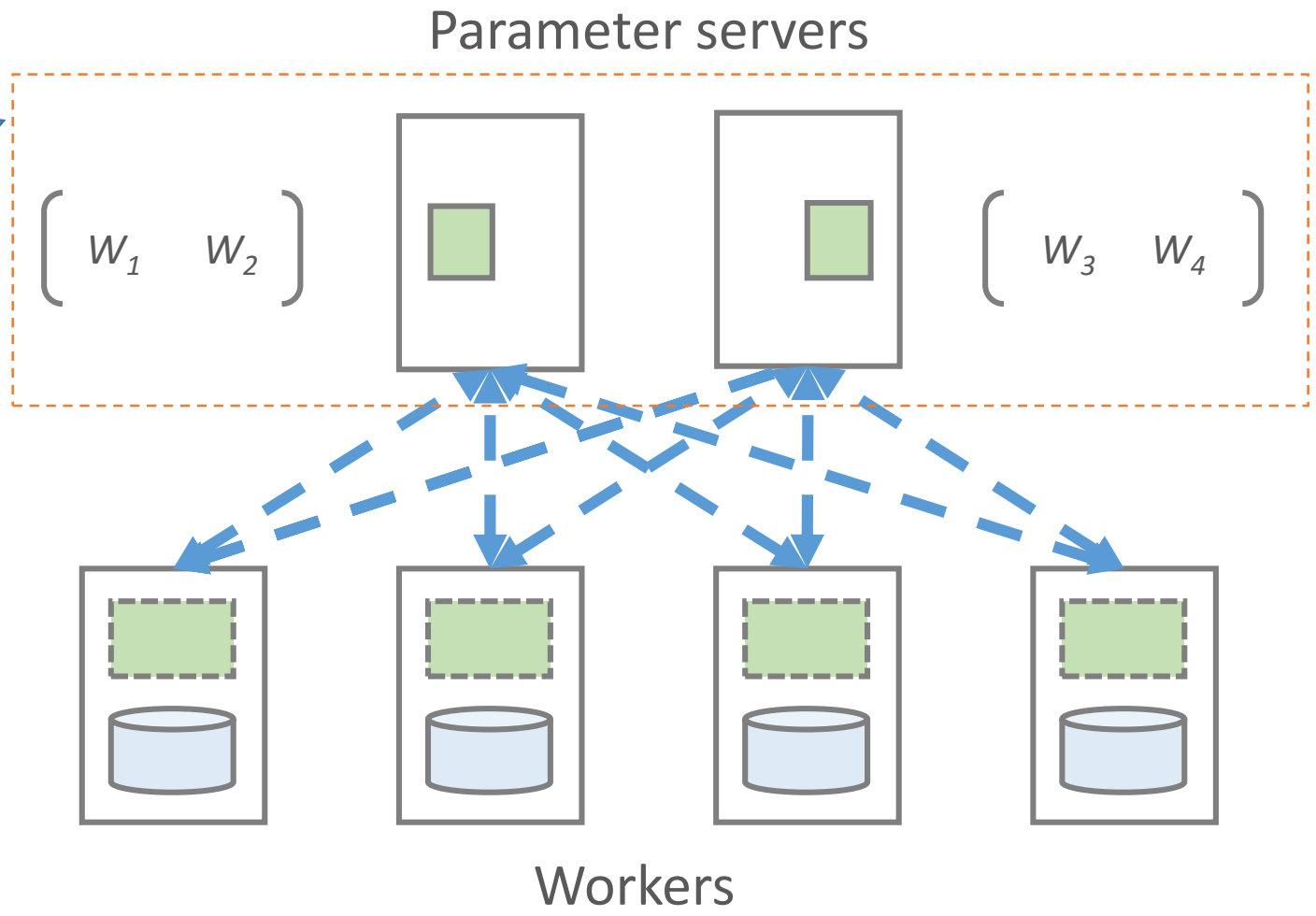


Distributed Machine Learning

Use multiple PS to avoid bottleneck



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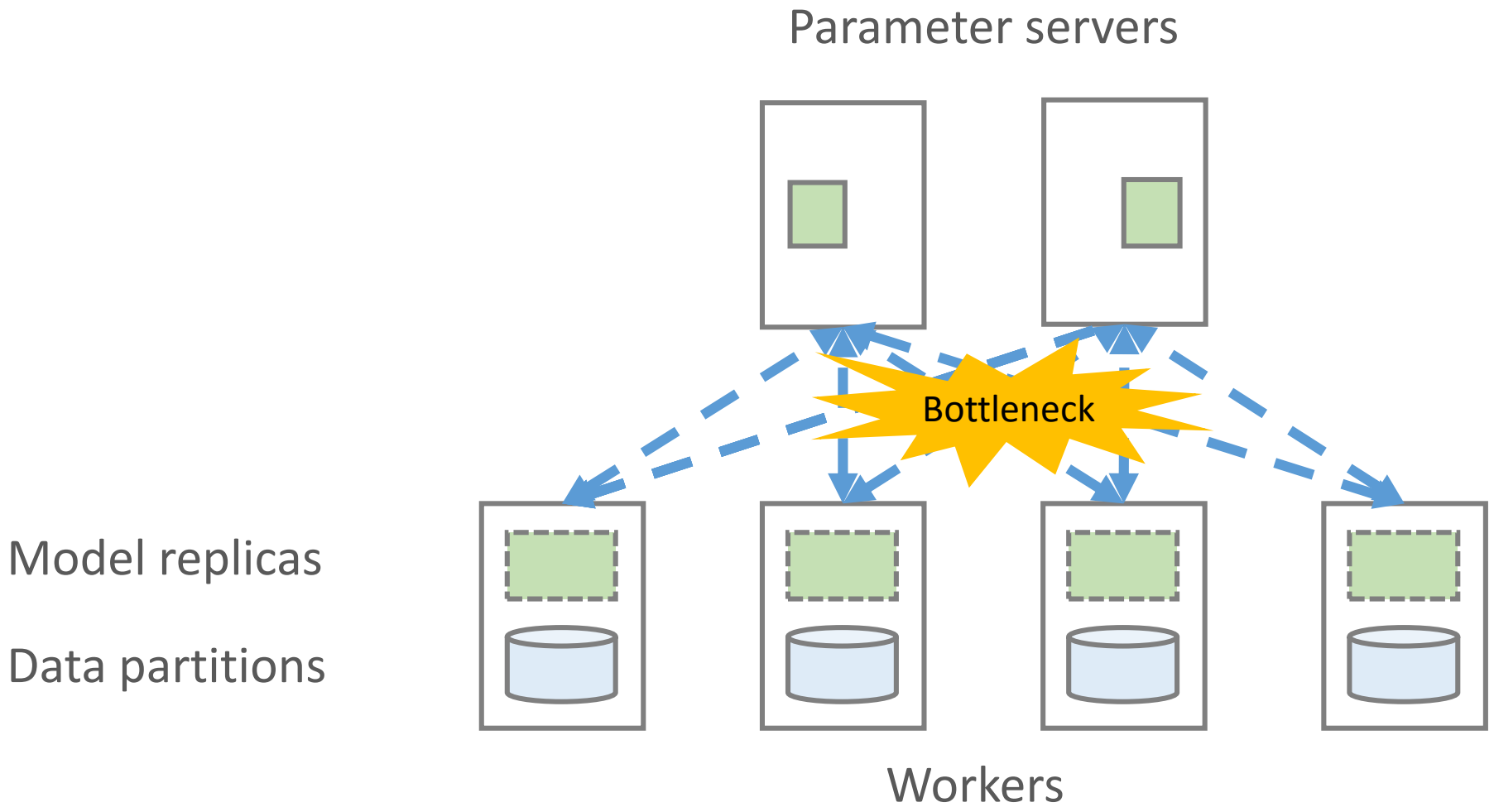
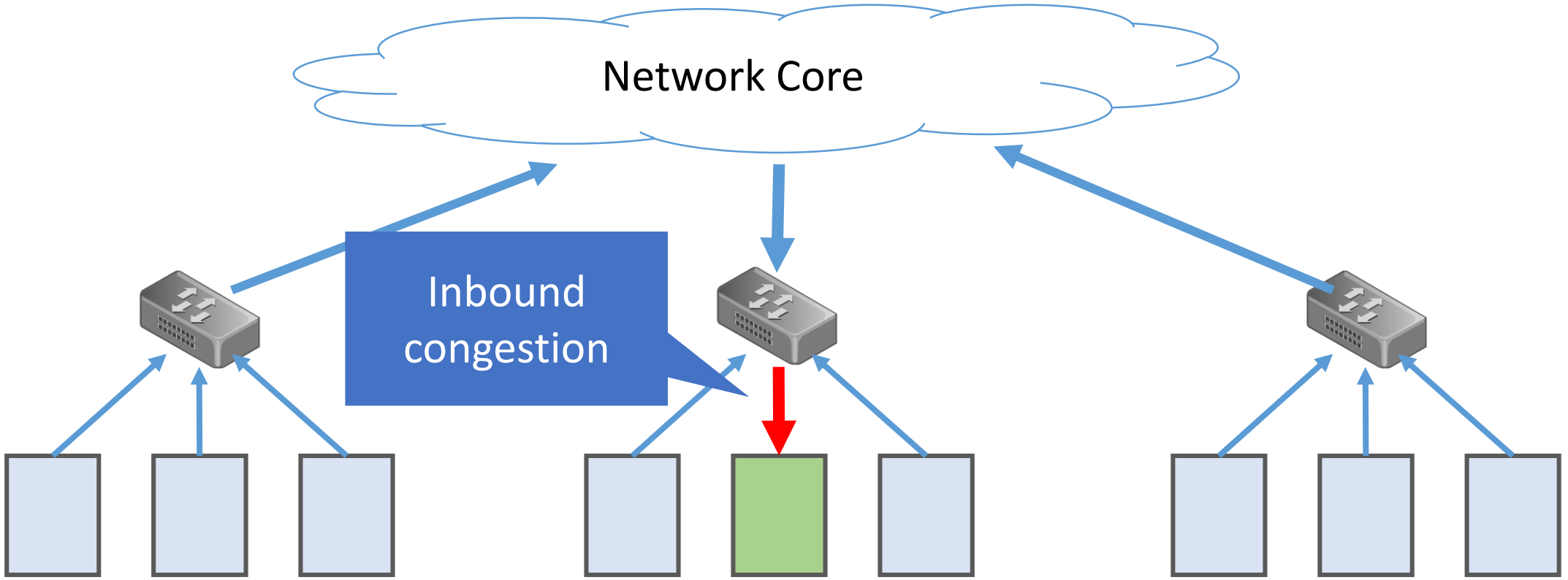
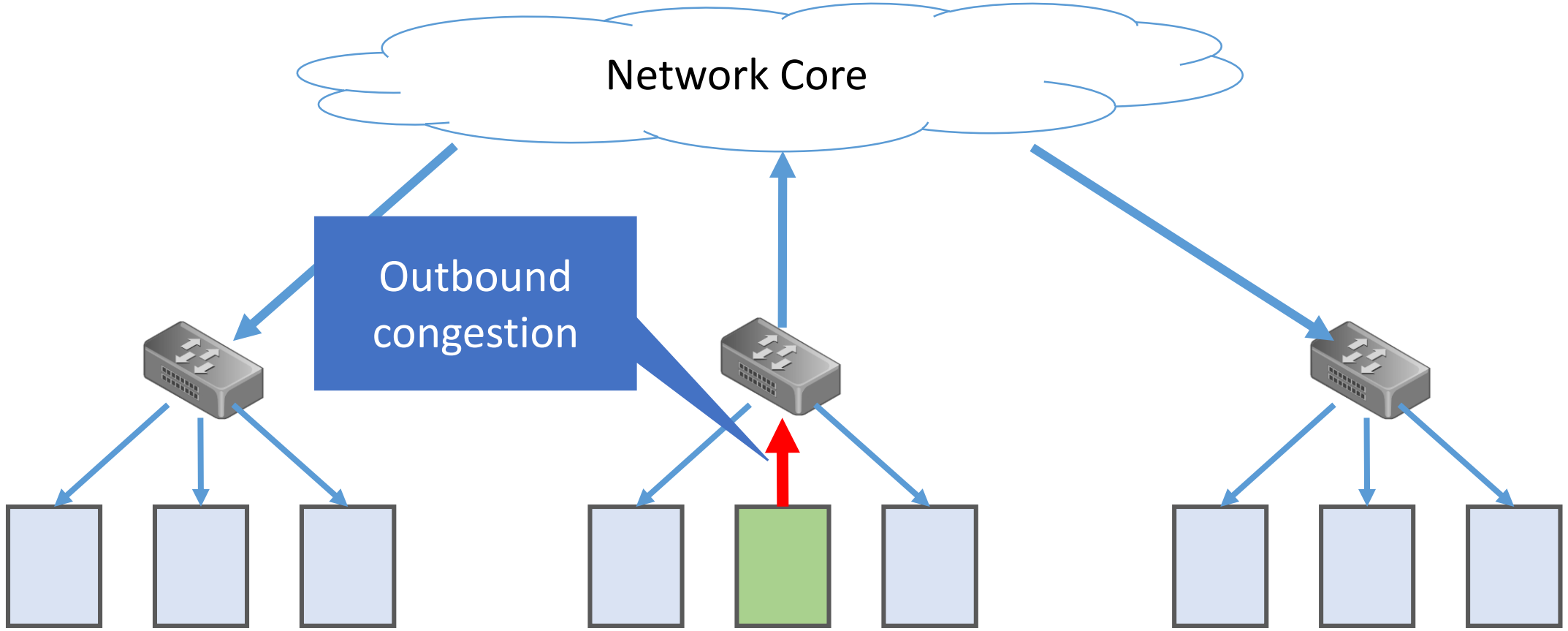


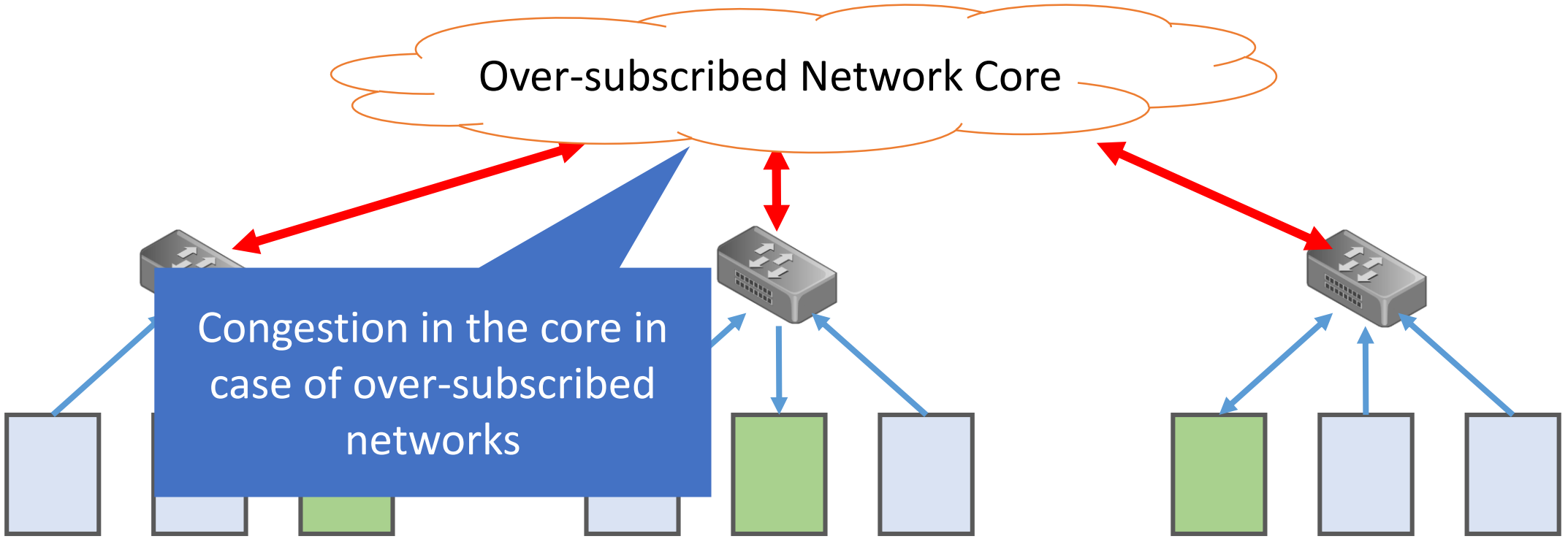
Inbound Congestion



Outbound Congestion

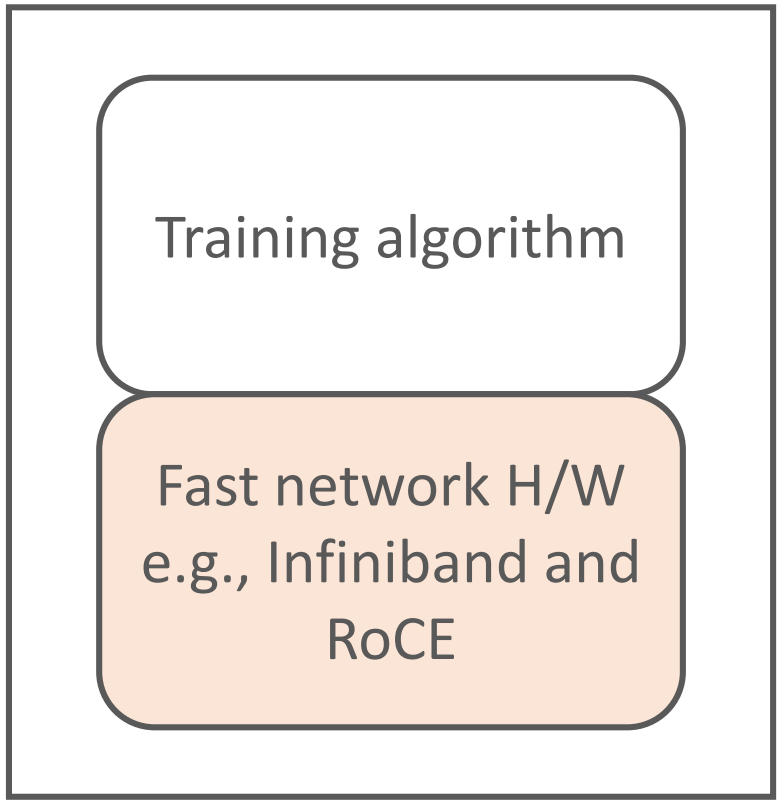


Network Core Congestion



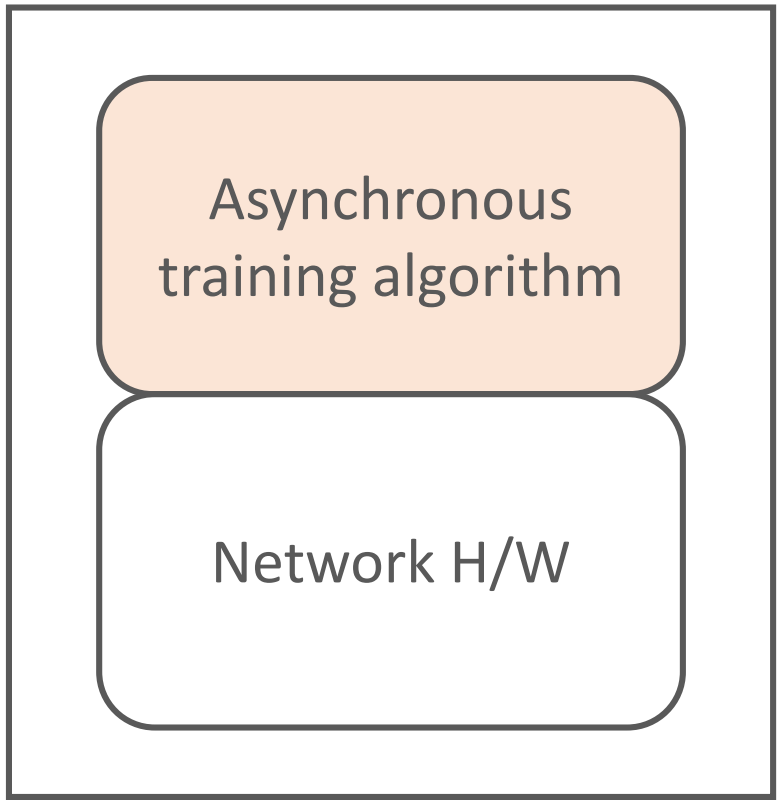
Existing Approaches

- Over-provisioning network
  - ☹ Expensive
  - ☹ Limited deployment scale
  - ☹ Not available in public clouds



Existing Approaches

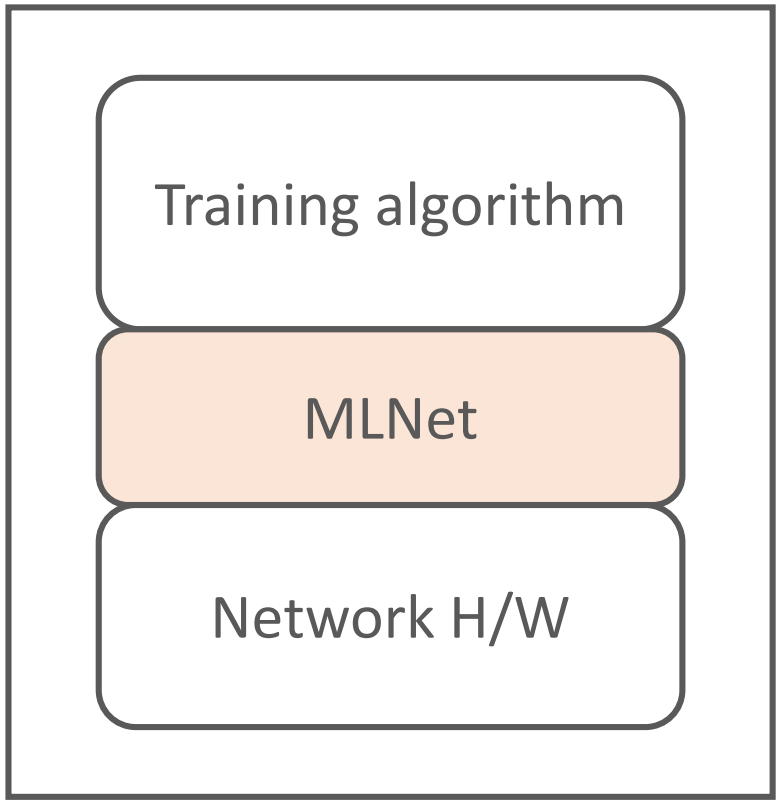
- Over-provisioning network
  - ☹ Expensive
  - ☹ Limited deployment scale
  - ☹ Not available in public Clouds
- Asynchronous training algorithm
  - ☹ Training efficiency
  - ☹ Might not converge



Rethinking the Network Design

MLNet is a communication layer designed for distributed machine learning systems

- ✓Improves communication efficiency
- ✓Orthogonal to existing approaches



Rethinking the Network Design

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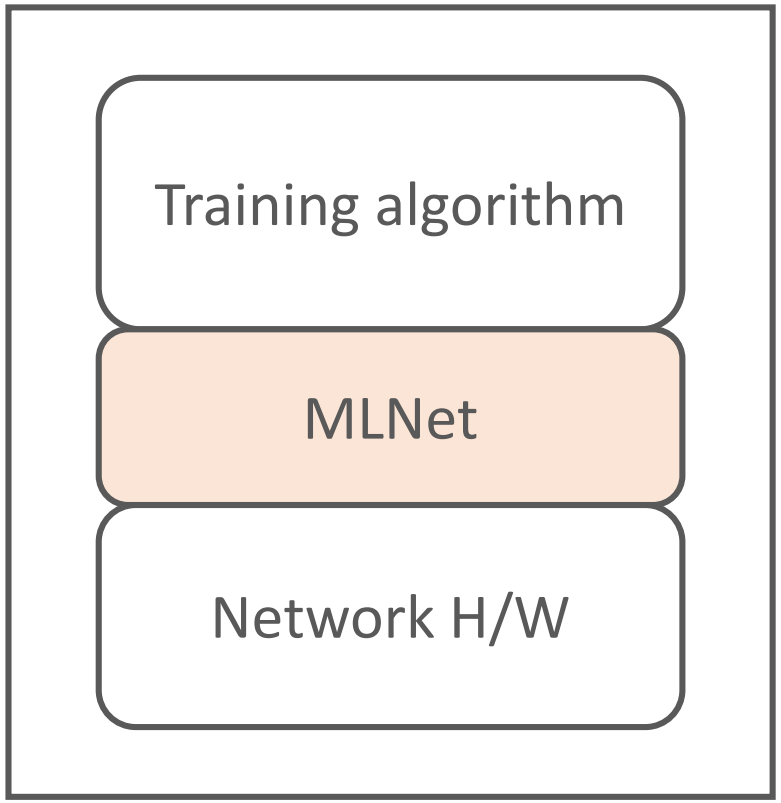
Optimizations:

- ✓Traffic reduction
- ✓Flow prioritization



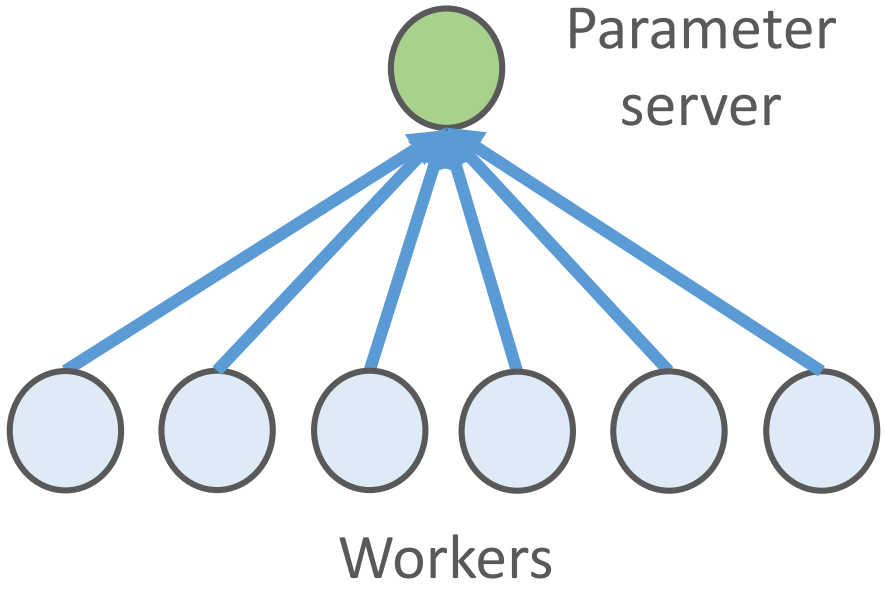
Traffic Reduction

Traffic Reduction: Key Insight

Aggregate the gradients from 6 workers

$$g_1 = g_{11} + g_{12} + g_{13} + g_{14} + g_{15} + g_{16}$$

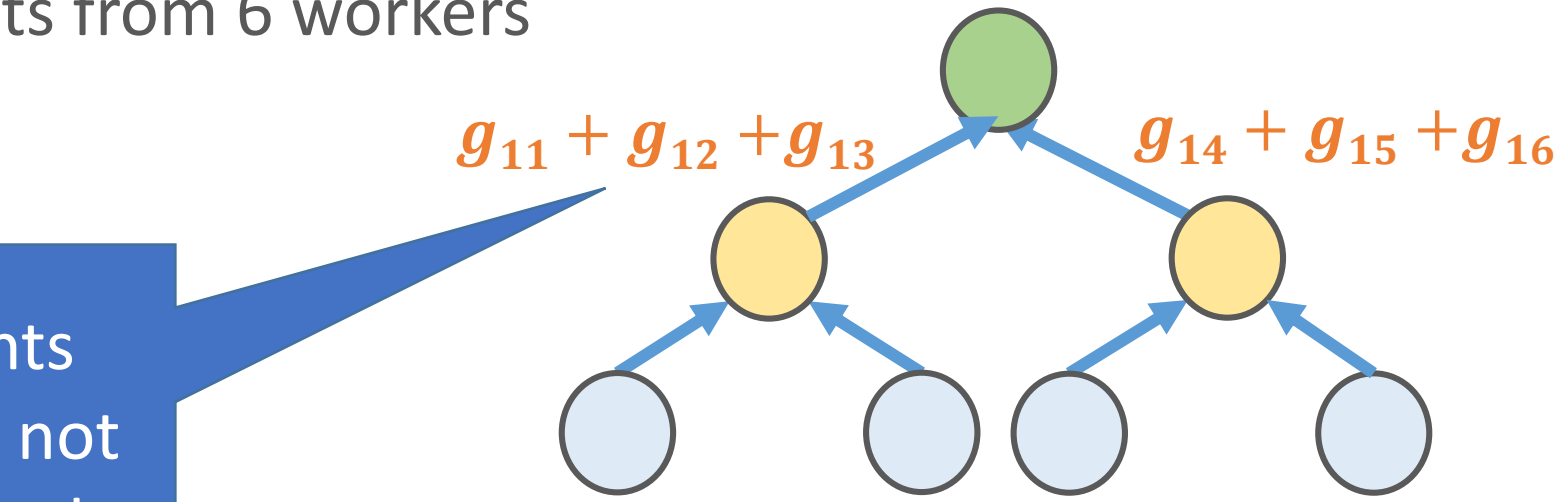
Aggregation is commutative and associative



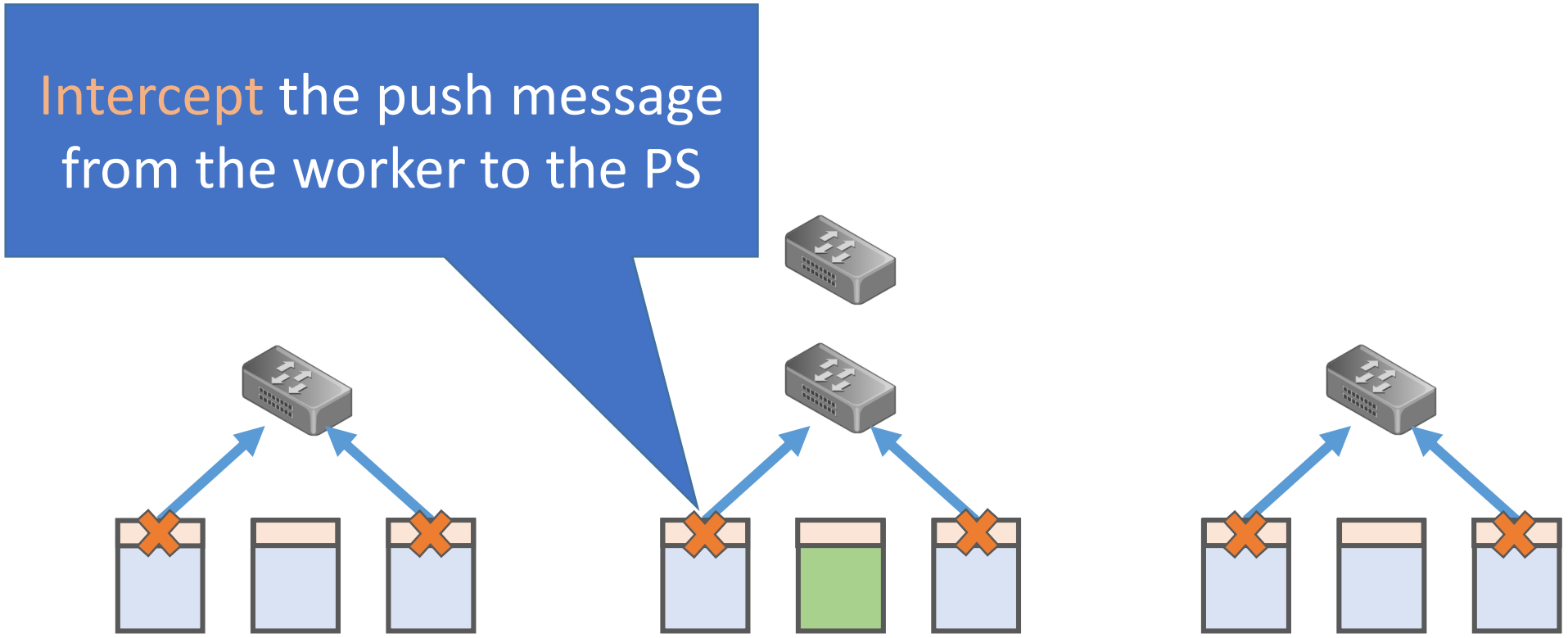
Traffic Reduction: Key Insight

Aggregate the gradients from 6 workers

Aggregate gradients incrementally does not change the final result

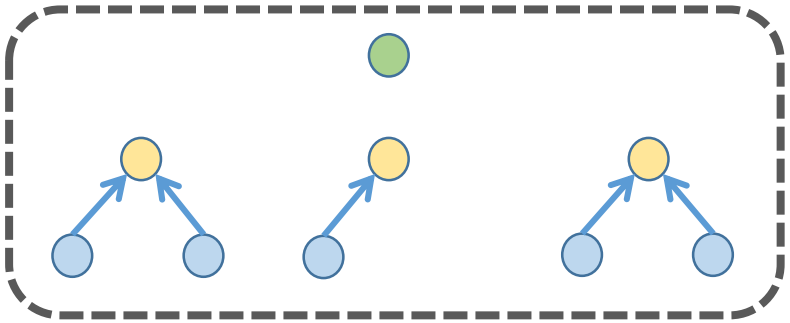


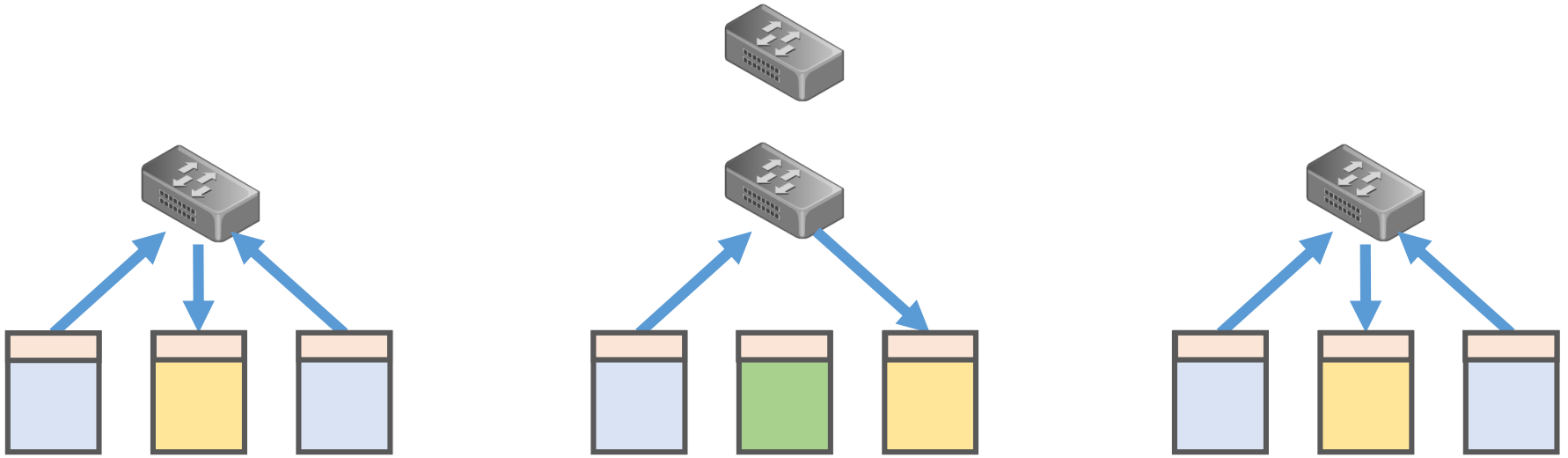
Traffic Reduction: Design



Traffic Reduction: Design

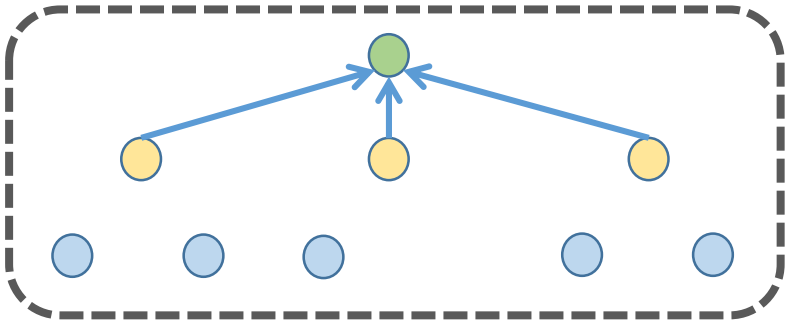
Redirect the messages to a local worker for partial aggregation

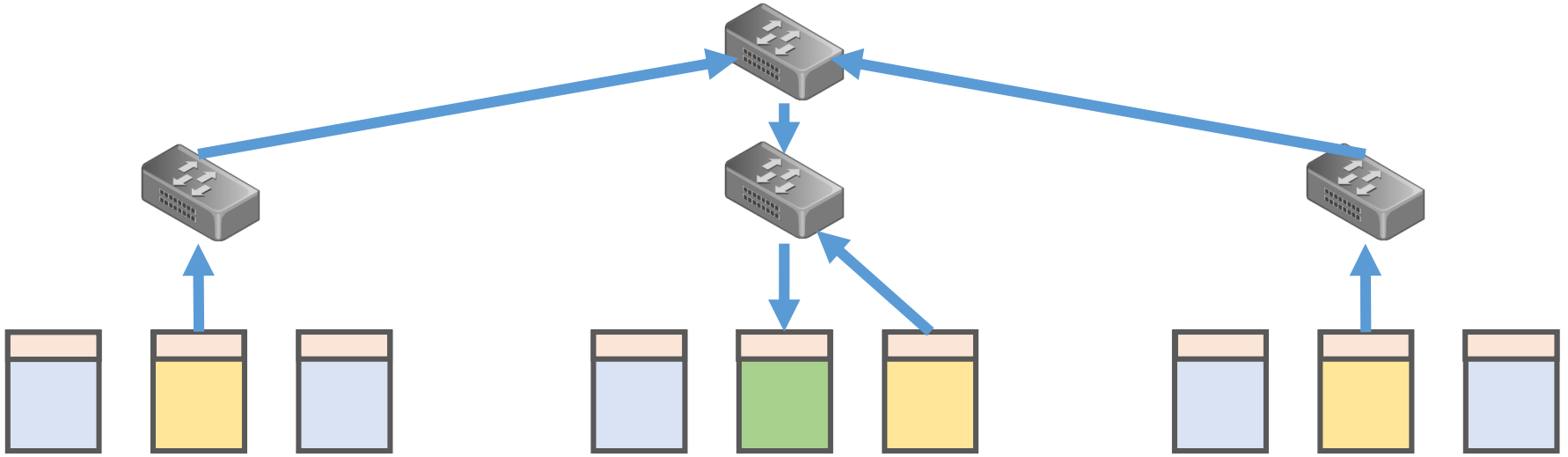




Traffic Reduction: Design

Send the partial results to the PS for final aggregation



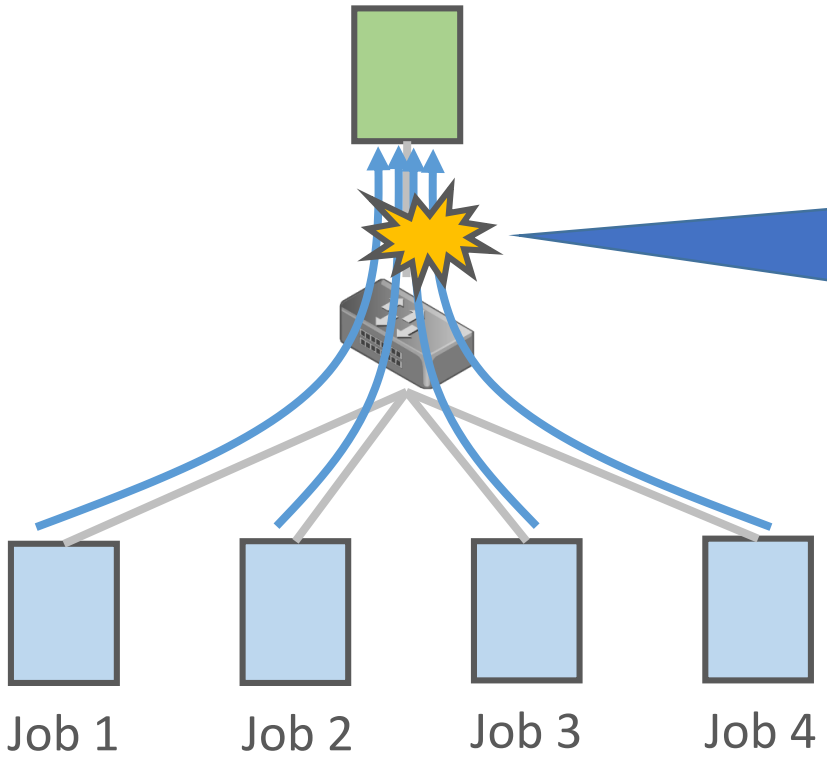


More details on the paper:

1. Traffic reduction in pull request
2. Asynchronous communication

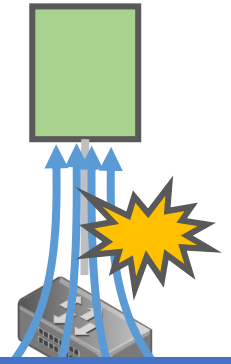
Traffic Prioritization

Traffic Prioritization: Key Insight

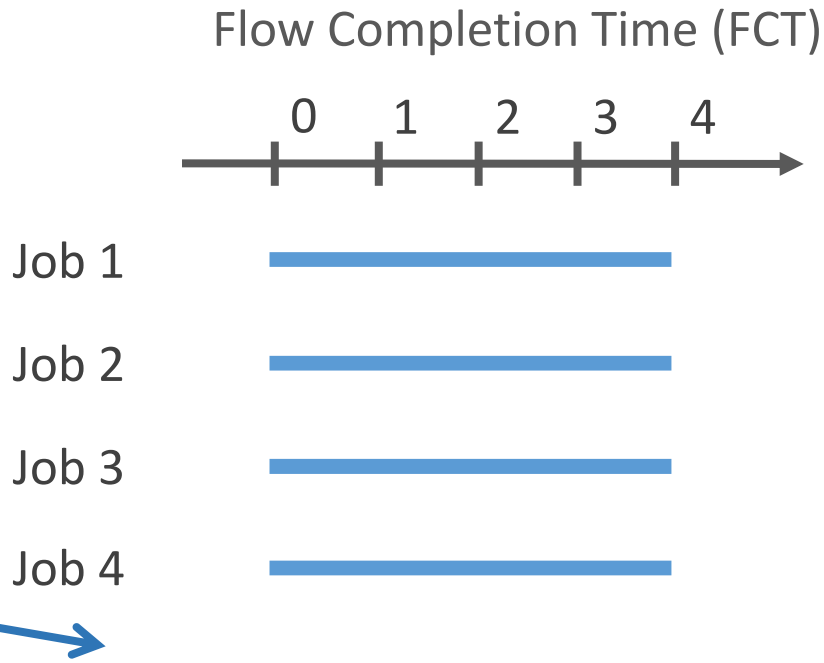


These four TCP flows share a bottleneck link and each of them gets 25% of its bandwidth

Traffic Prioritization: Key Insight

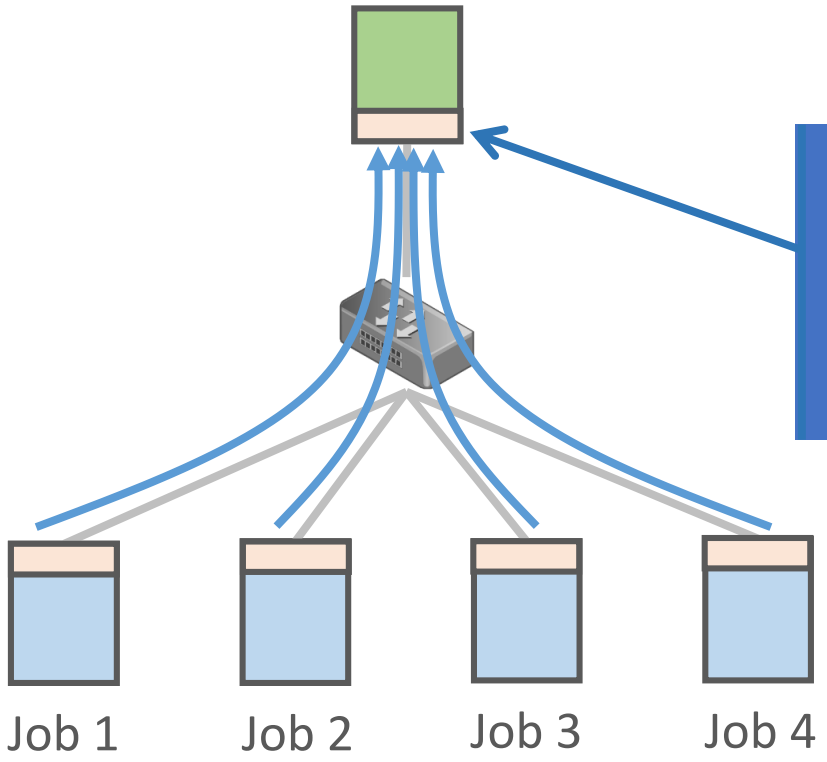


All flows are delayed! TCP per-flow fairness is harmful in distributed machine learning.



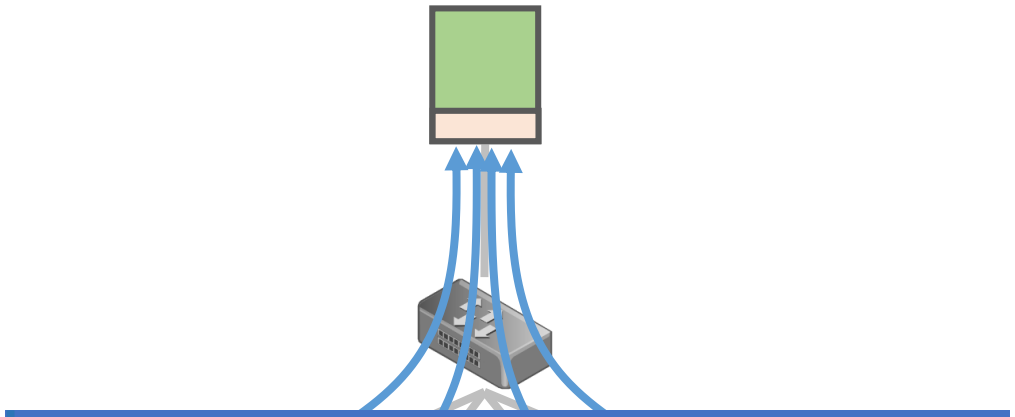
Average completion time is 4

Traffic Prioritization: Key Insight

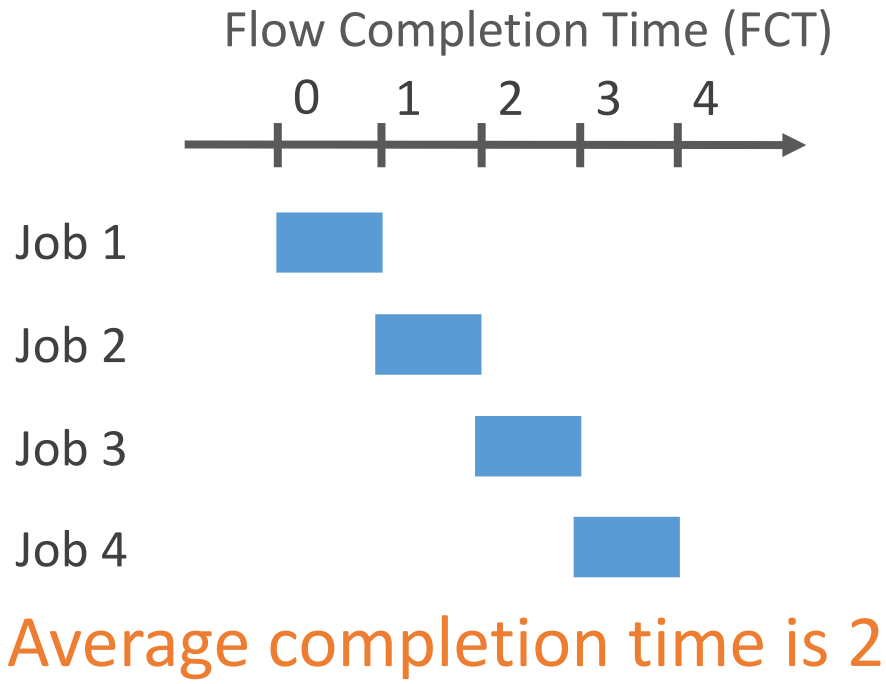


MLNet prioritizes the competing flows to minimize the average training time

Traffic Prioritization: Key Insight



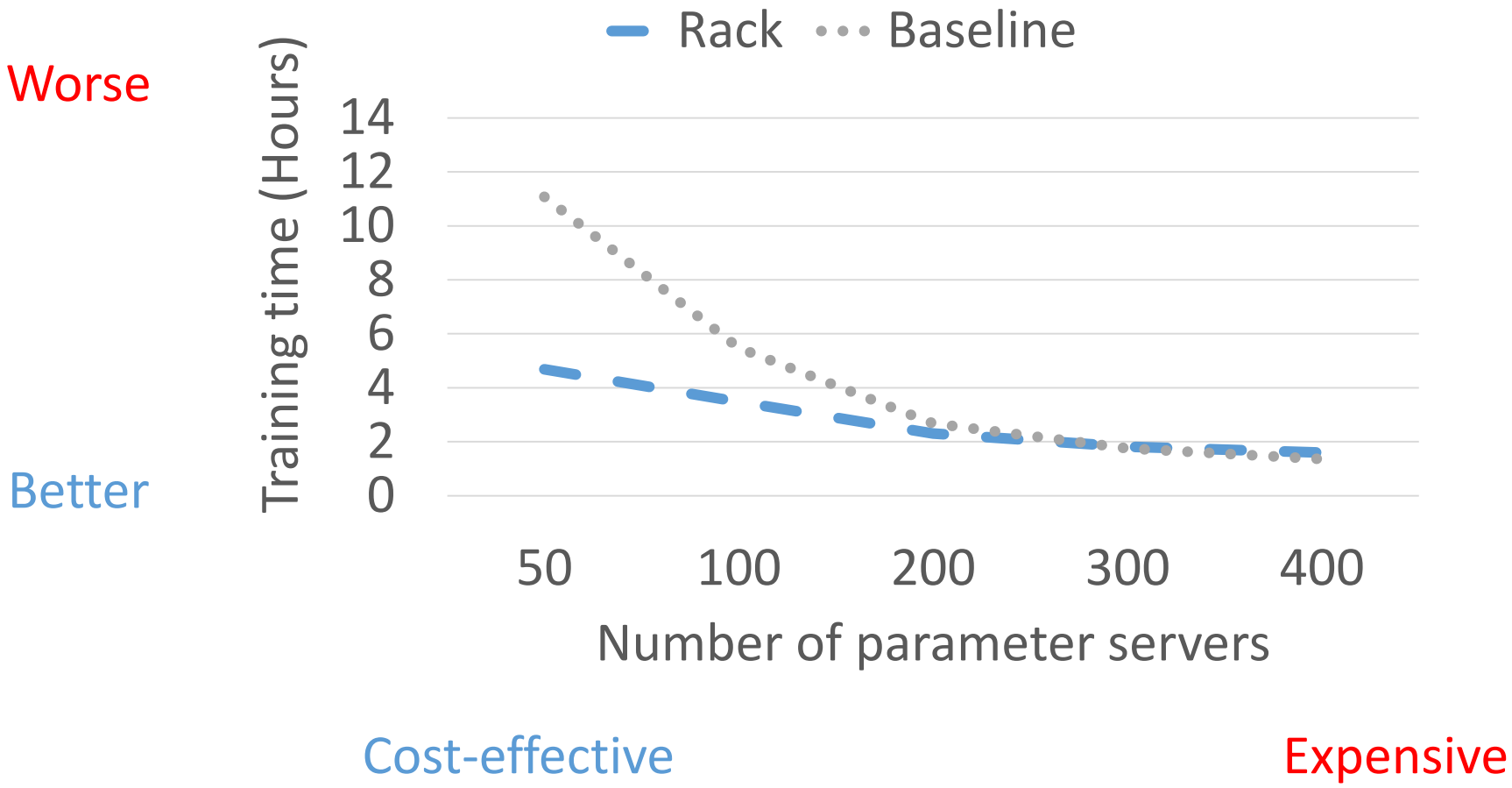
Shorten average FCT can largely improve average training time



Evaluation

- Simulate common network topology in data centers
  - Classic 10Gbps 1024-node data center topology [Fat-Tree, SIGCOMM'08]
- Training large scale logistic regression
  - 65B parameters, 141TB dataset [Parameter Server, OSDI'14]
  - 800 workers [Parameter Server, OSDI'14]
- With production trace
  - Data processing rate: uniform(100, 200) MBps
  - Synchronize every 30 seconds

Traffic Reduction (Non-oversubscribed Net.)



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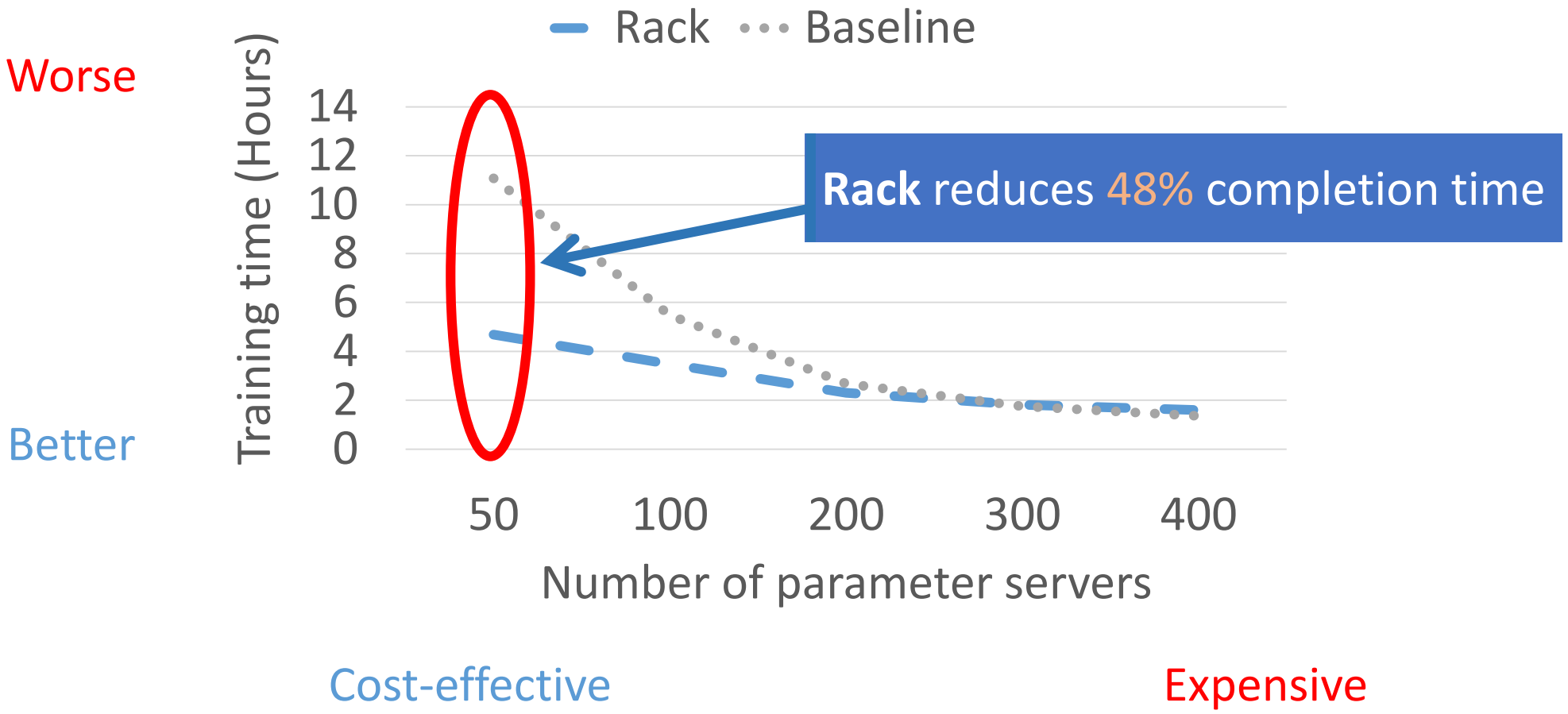

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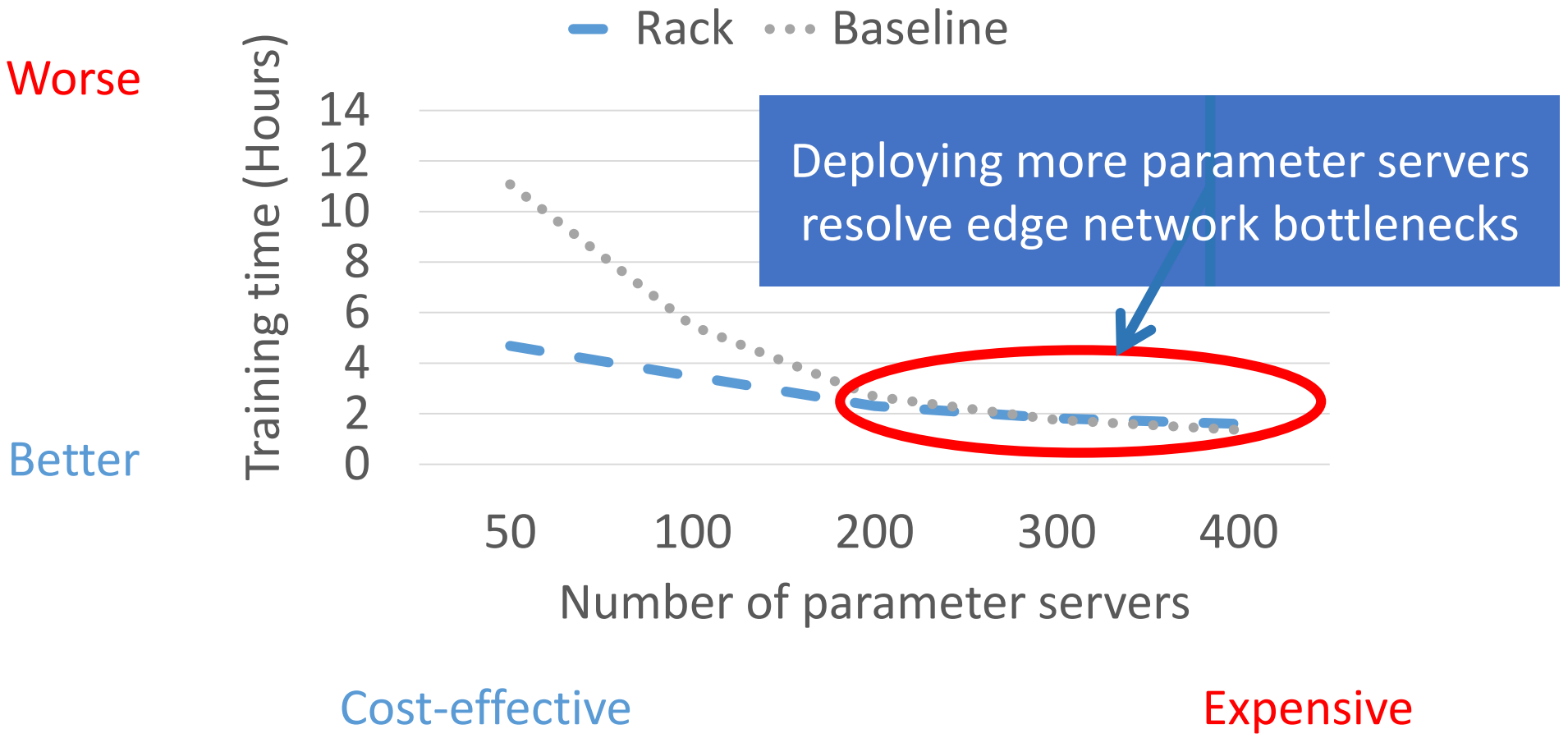

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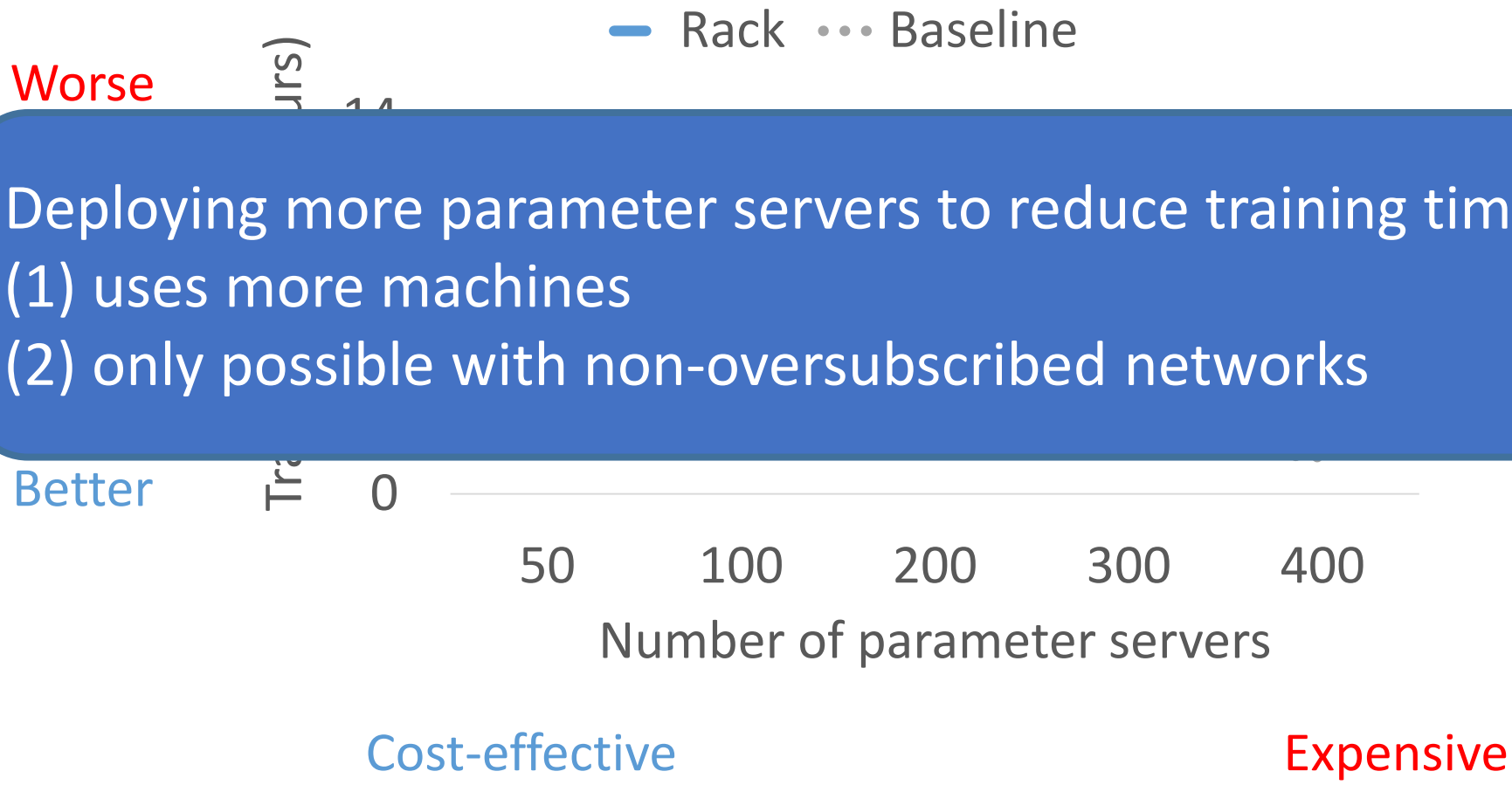
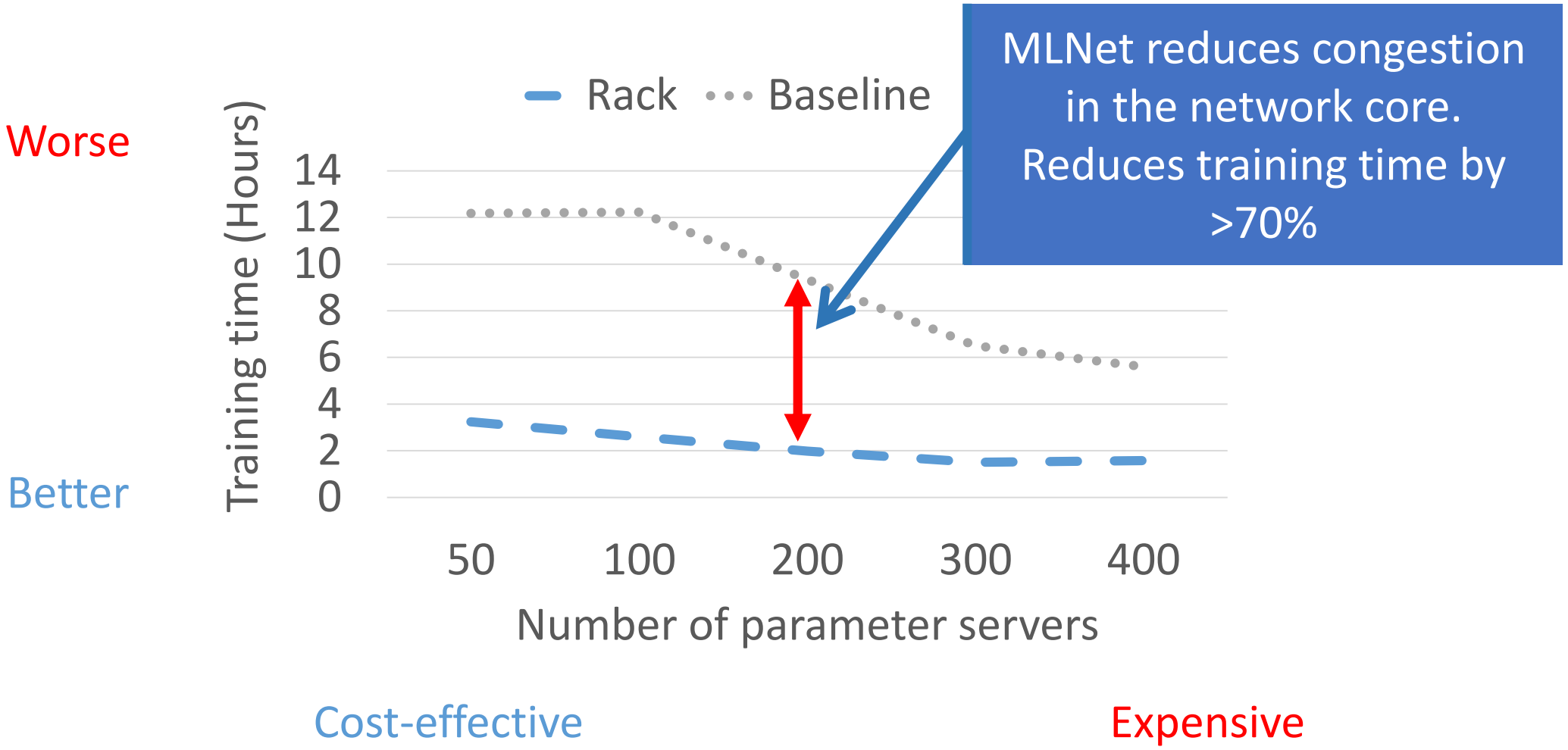


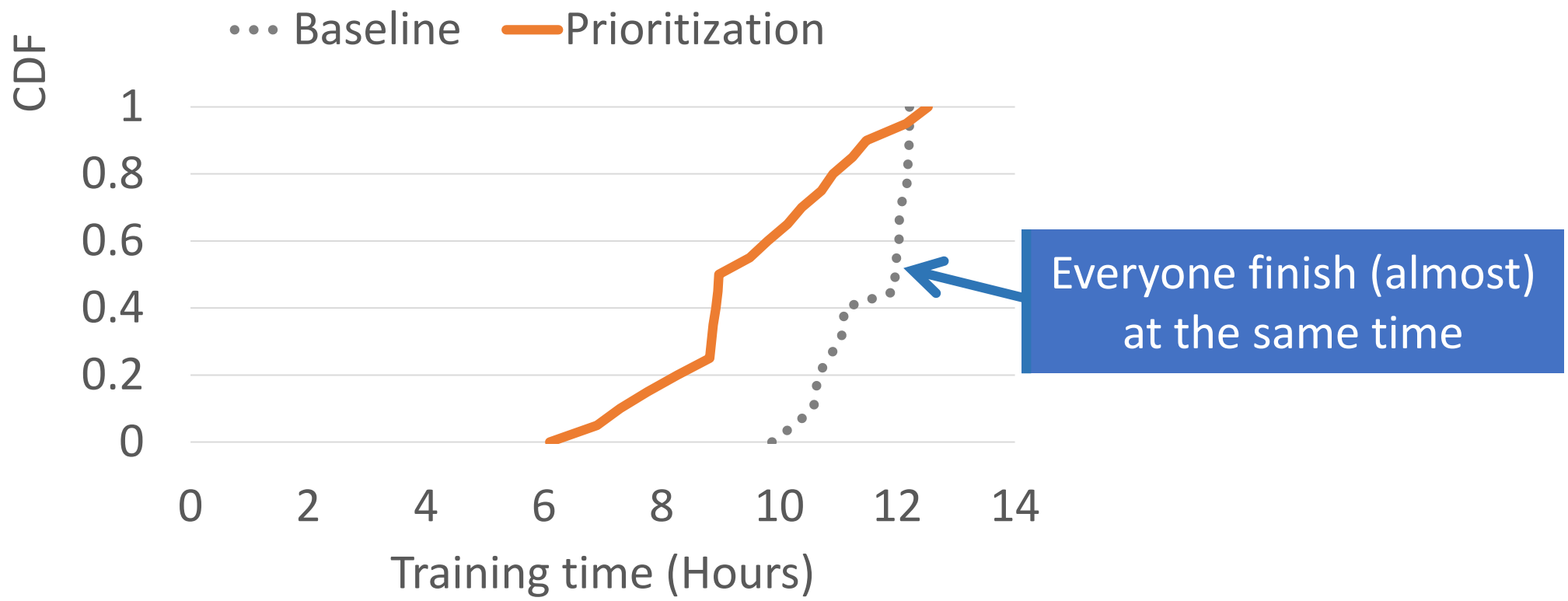
Deploying more parameter servers to reduce training time
(1) uses more machines
(2) only possible with non-oversubscribed networks

Traffic Reduction (1:4 Oversubscribed Net.)

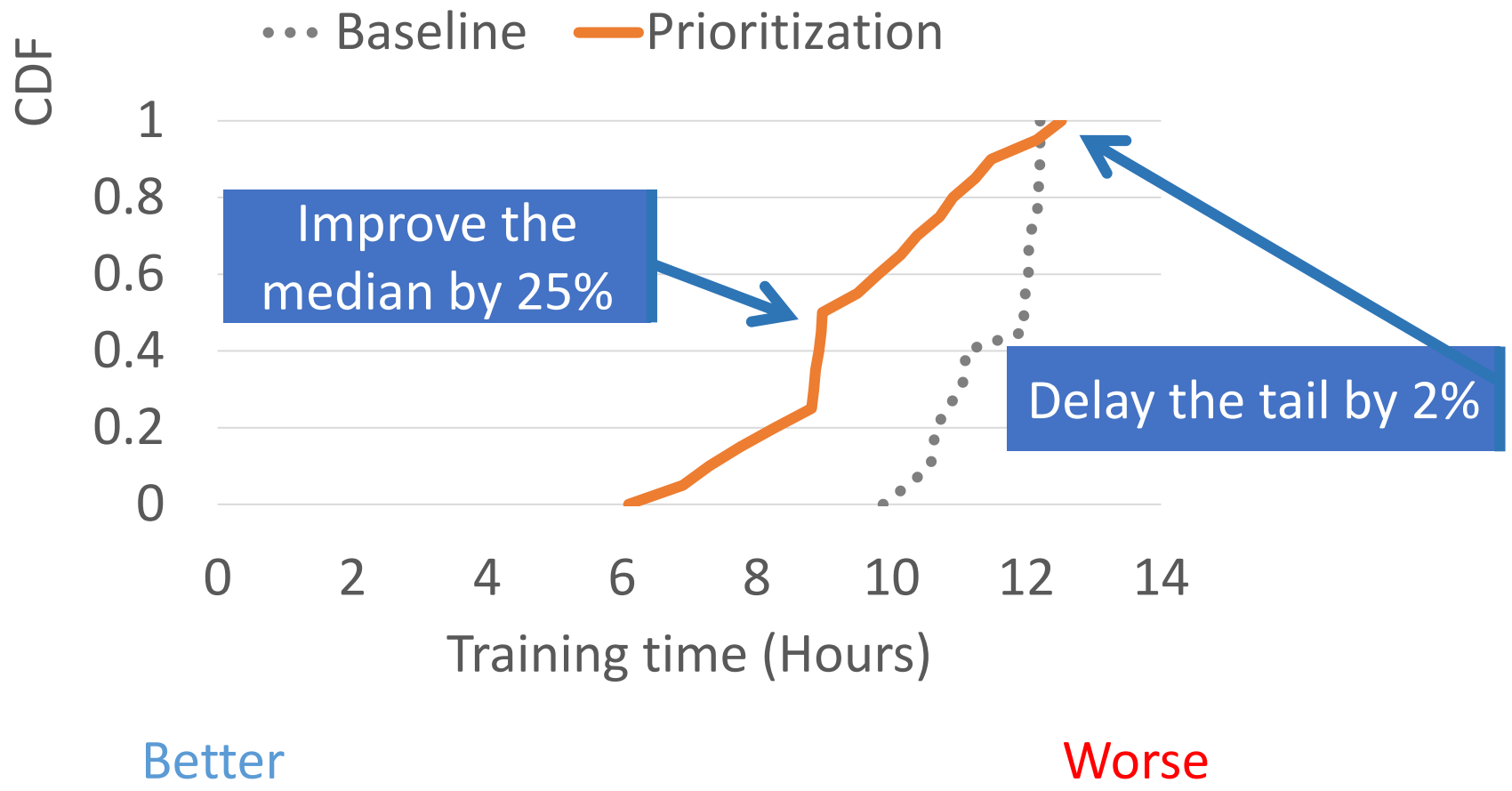


Traffic Prioritization

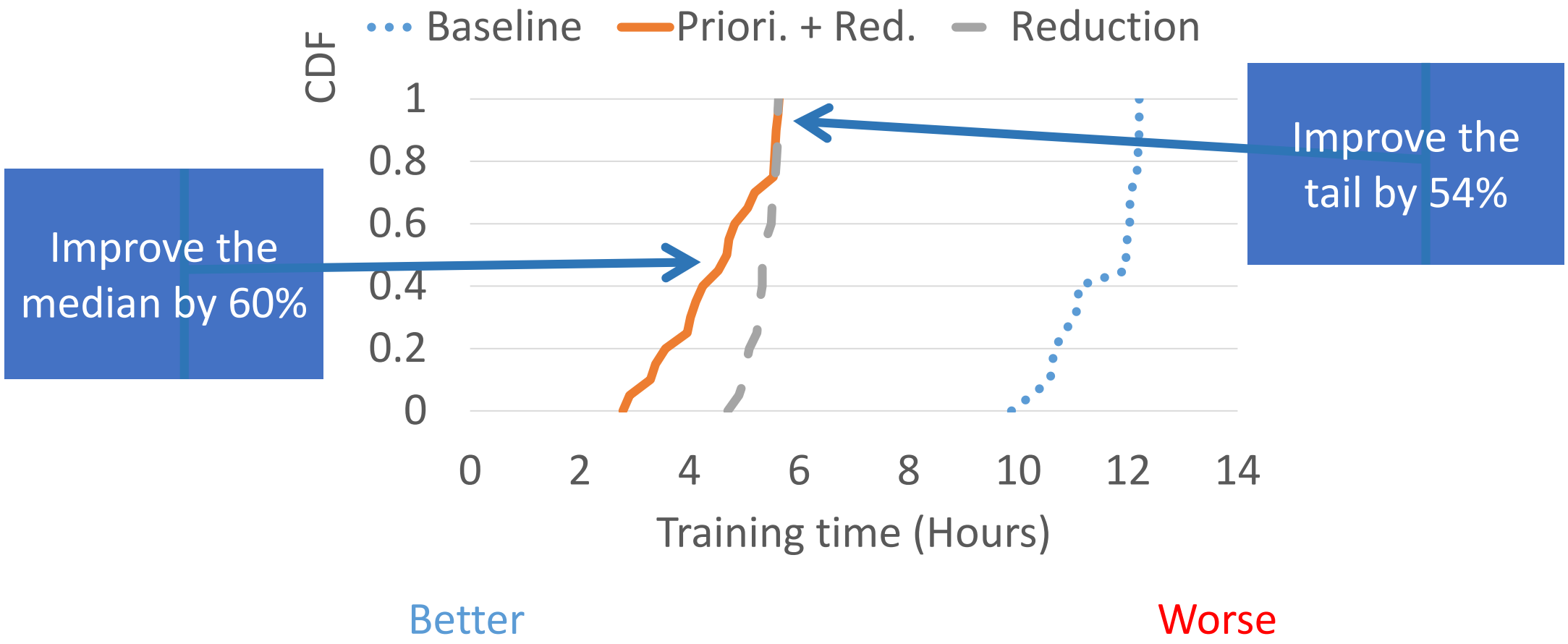
- 20 jobs running in the same cluster



Traffic Prioritization



Traffic Prioritization + Traffic Reduction



More details on the paper:

1. Binary tree aggregation
2. More analysis

Summary

- MLNet can significantly improve the network performance of distributed machine learning
  - Traffic reduction
  - Flow prioritization
  - Drop-in solution

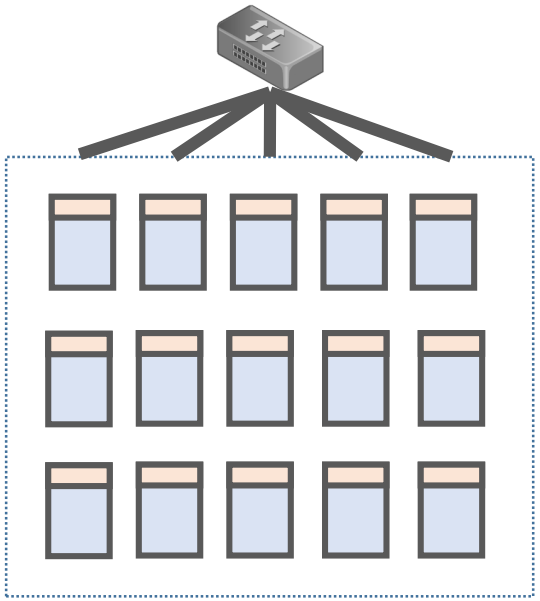
Thanks!

Discussion

- Relaxed fault-tolerance?
  - When worker fails, drop that portion of data
- Adaptive communication
  - Reduce synchronization when network is busy?
- Hybrid network infrastructure?
  - Some with 10GE, some with 40GE ROCE, etc.
- Degree of tree?

Traffic Reduction: Design

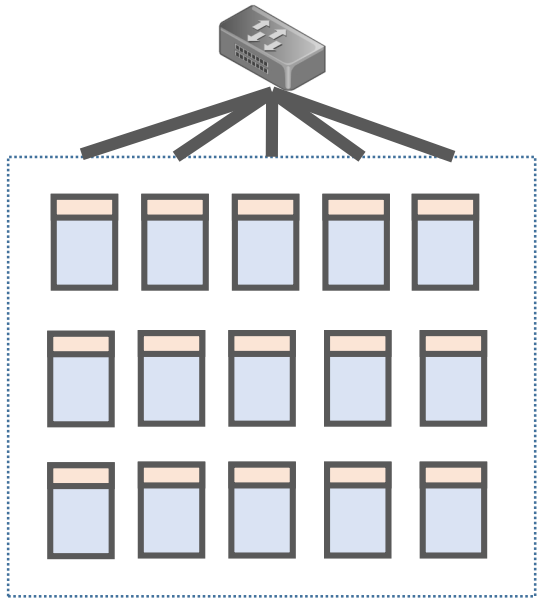
Is the local aggregator a new bottleneck?



Example: 15 workers in a rack

Traffic Reduction: Design

Build a balanced aggregation structure such as a binary tree.



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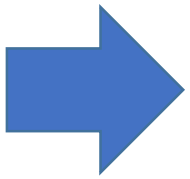
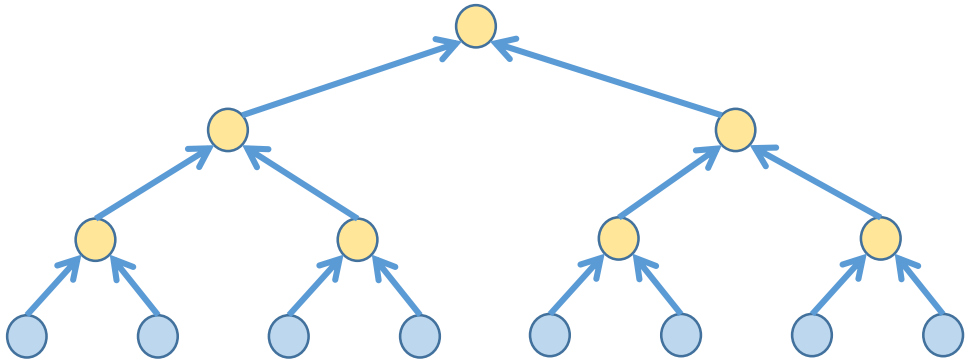
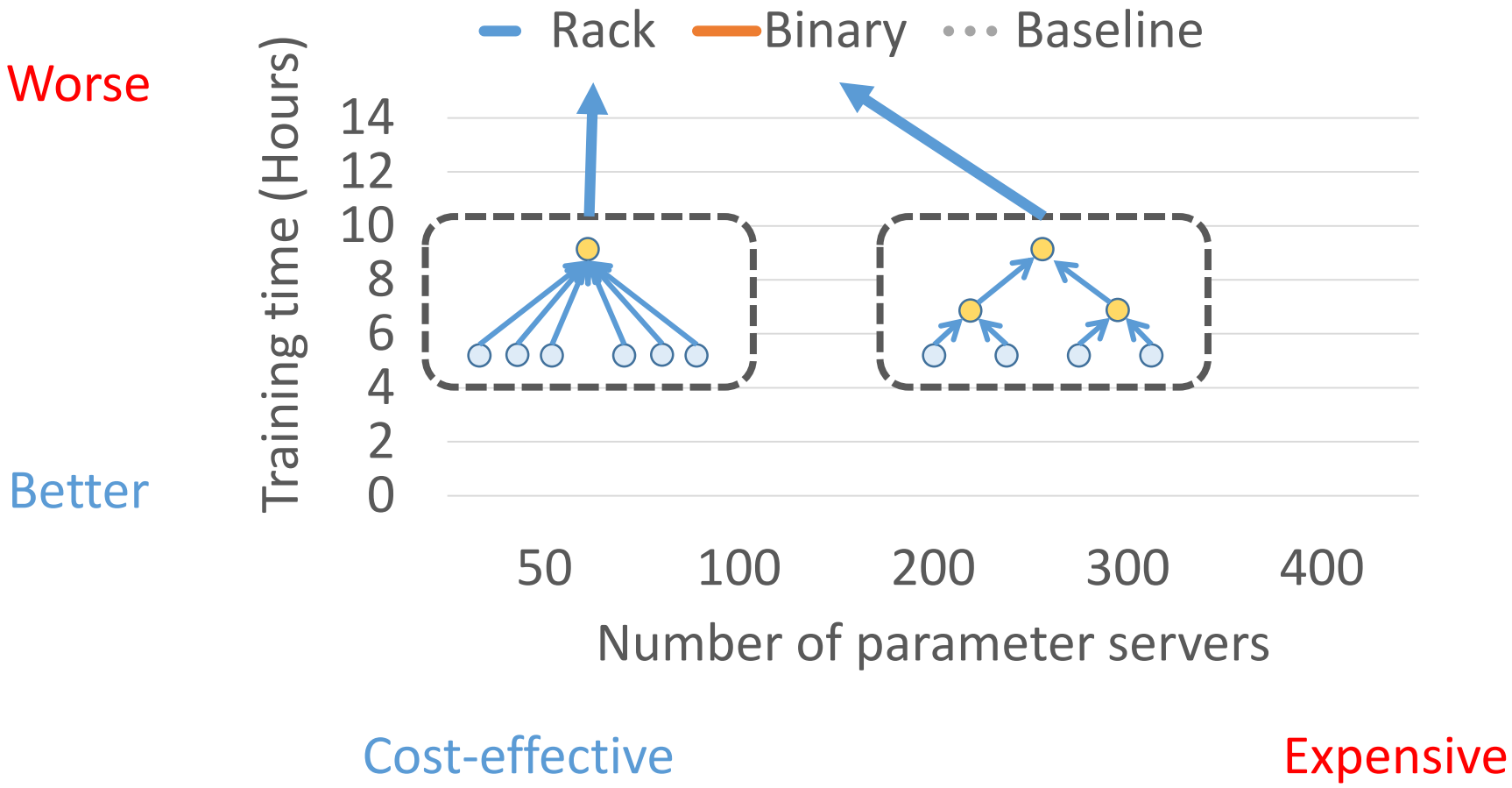


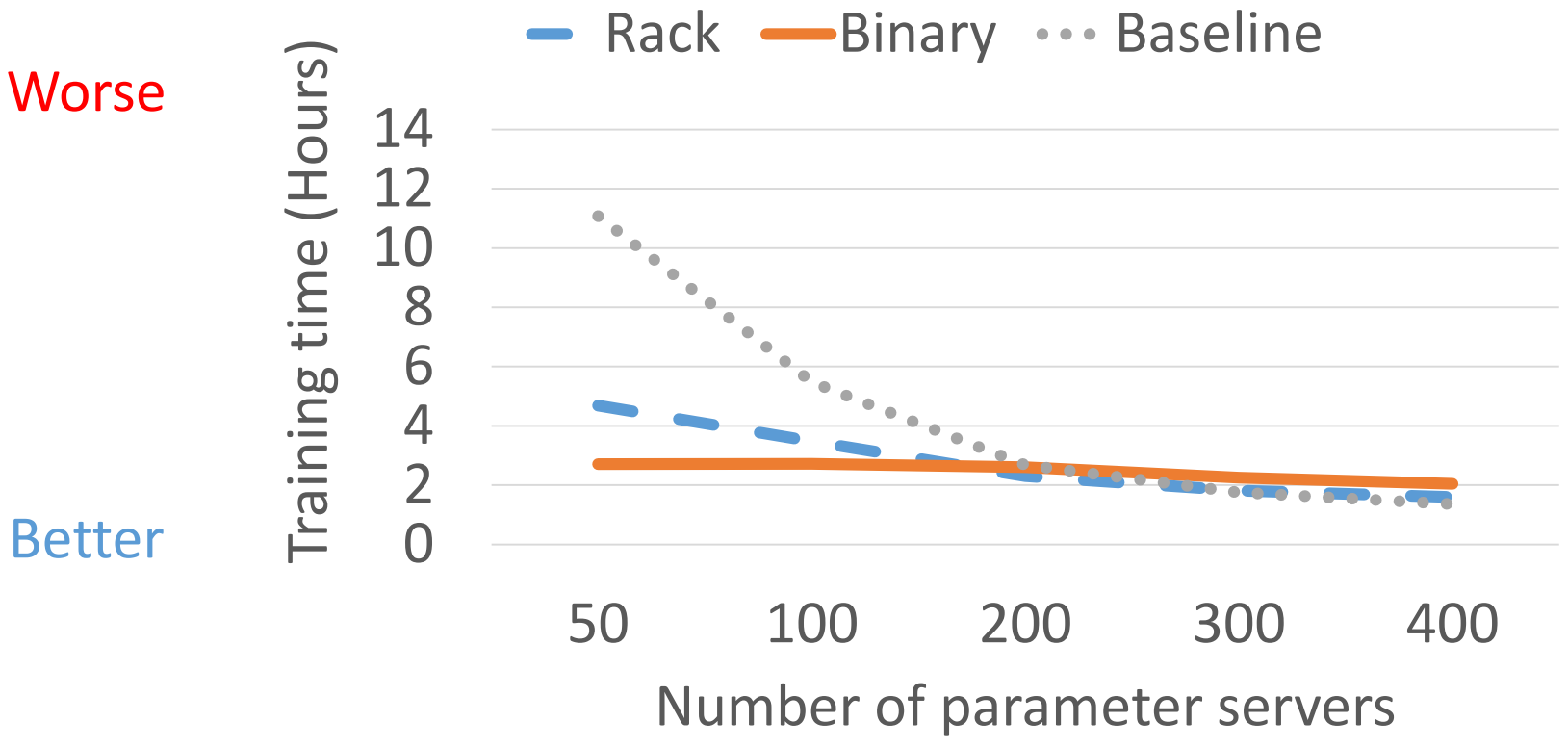


Binary tree aggregation

Traffic Reduction



Traffic Reduction (Non-oversubscribed Net.)



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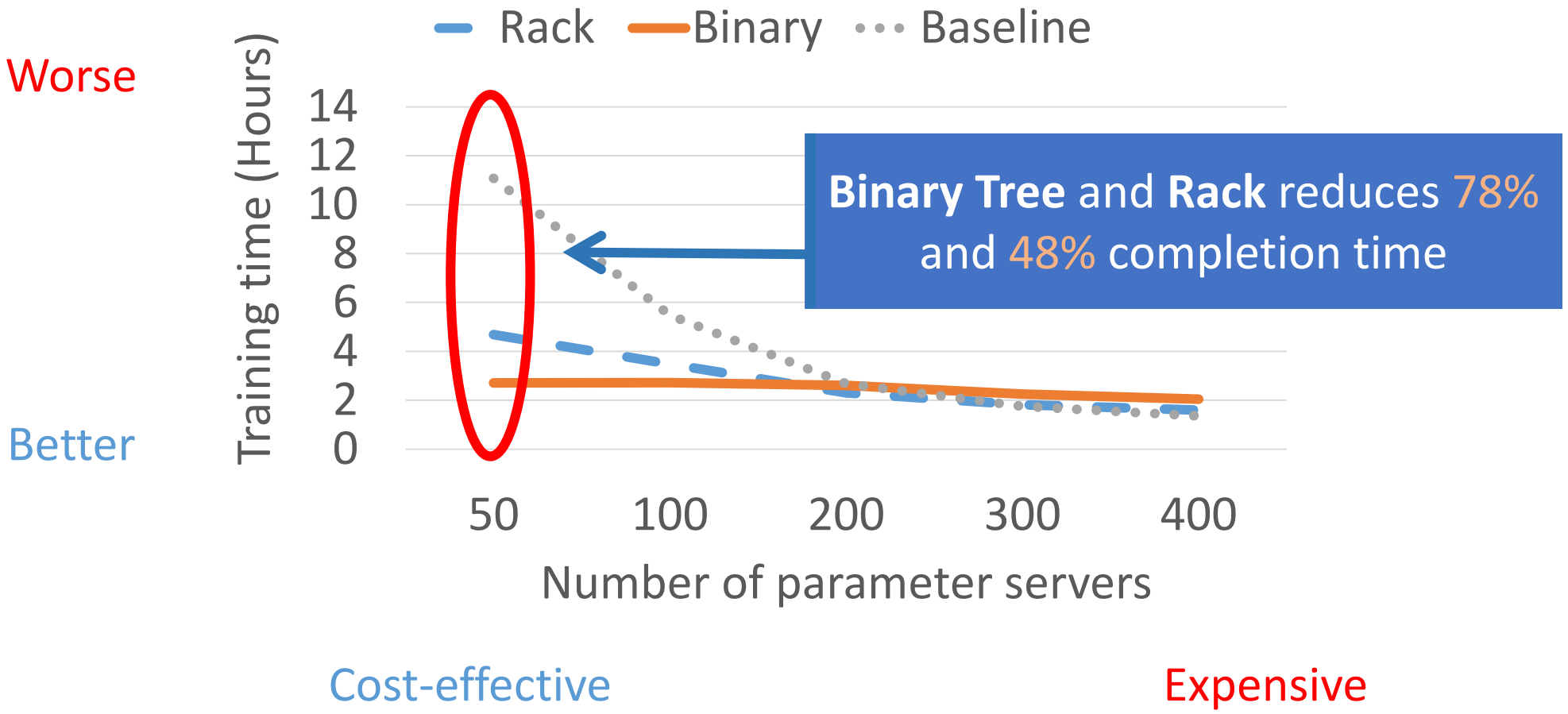

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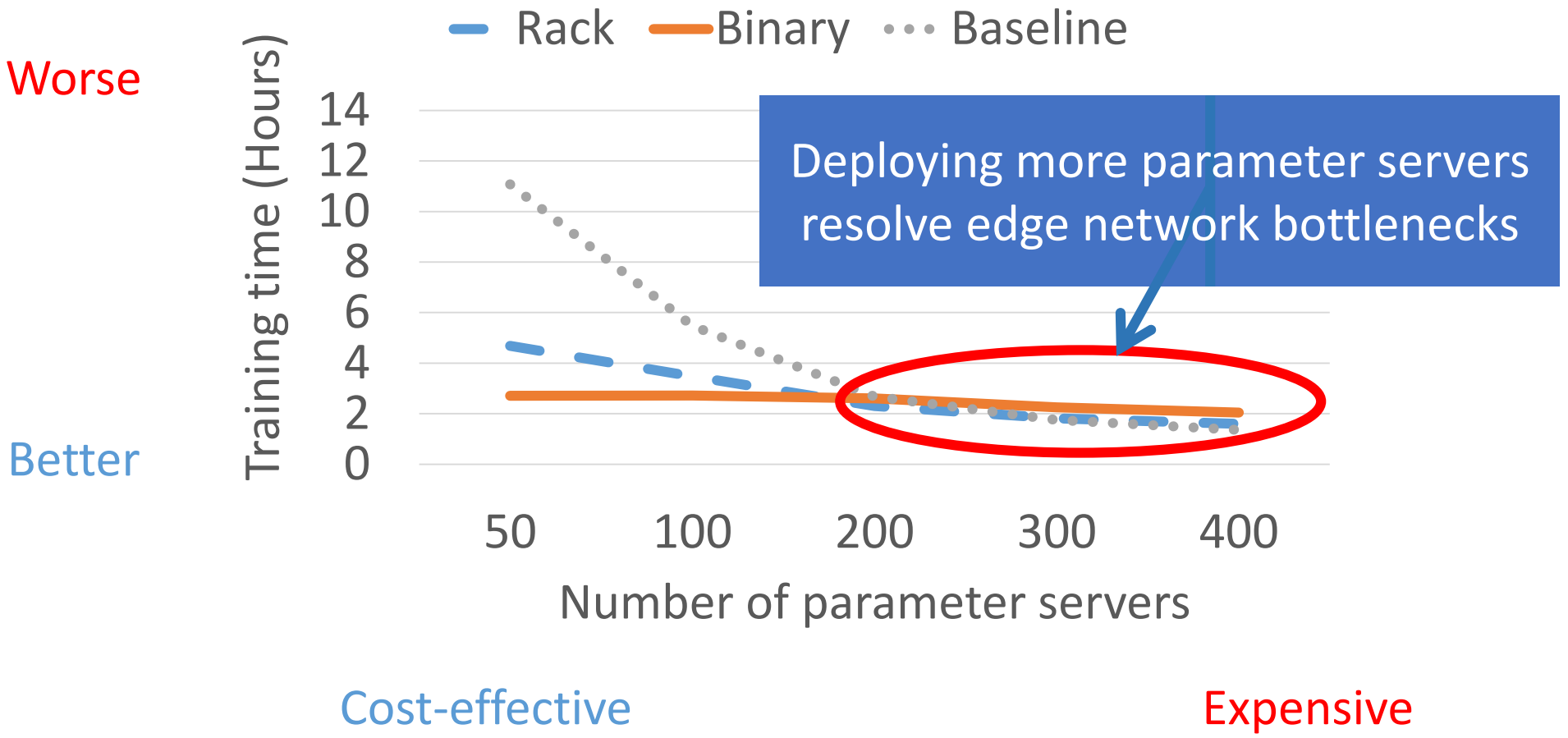

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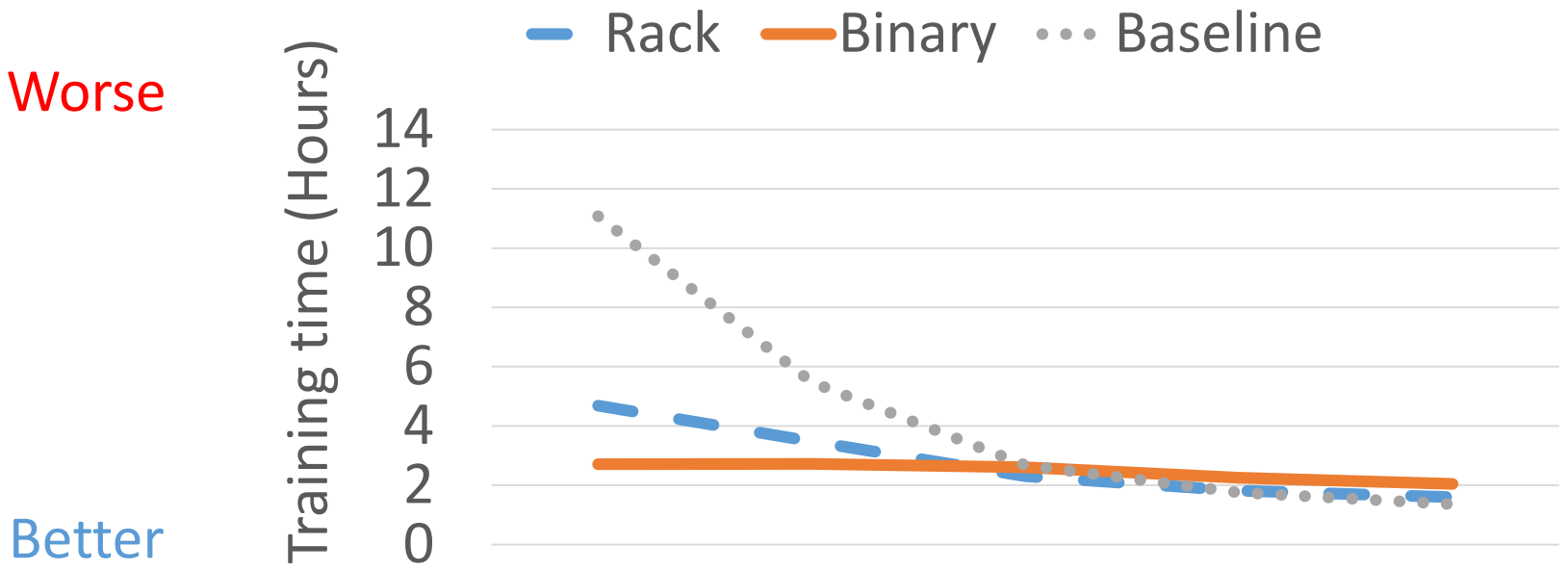

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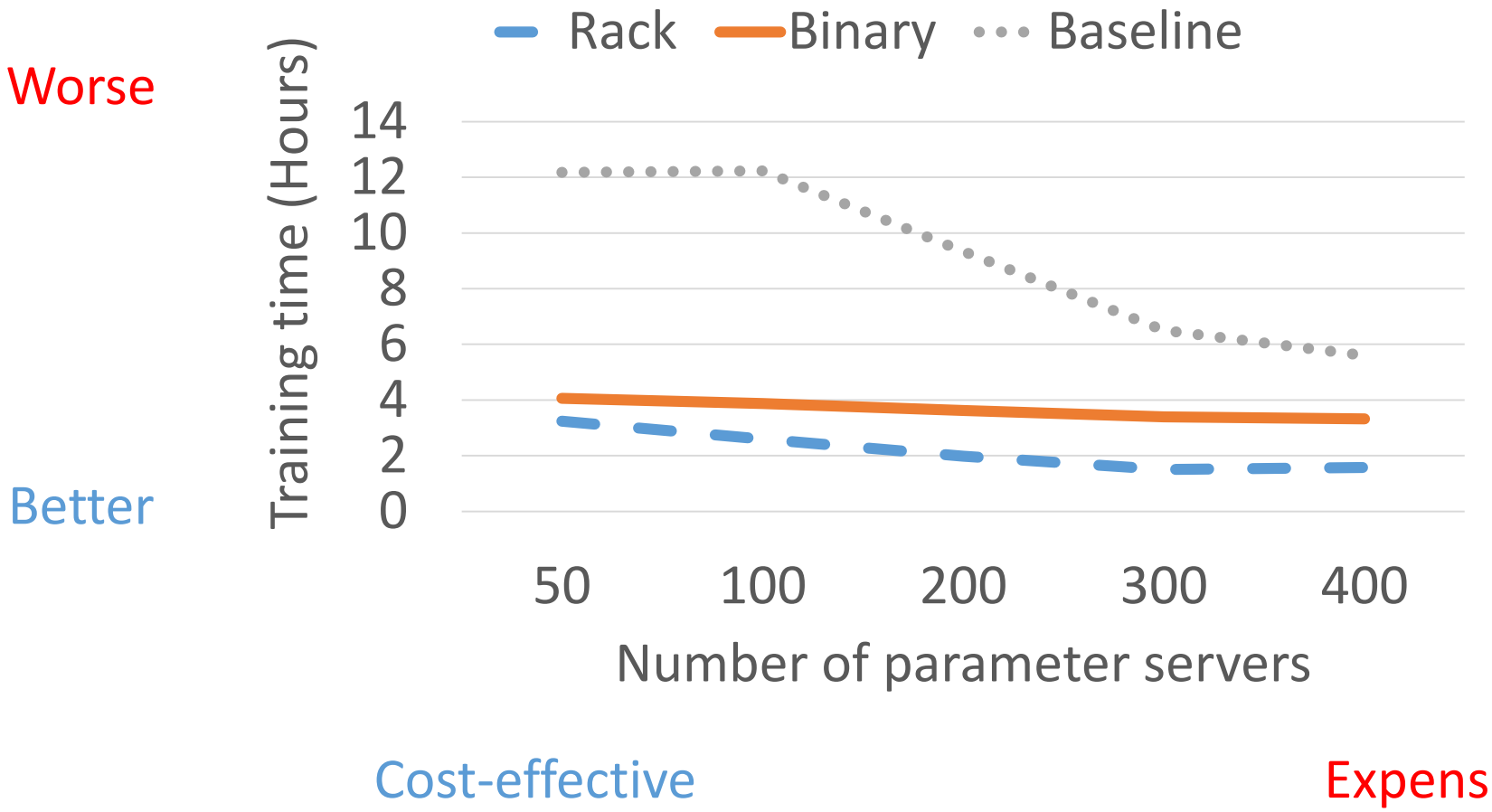
Traffic Reduction (1:4 Oversubscribed Net.)



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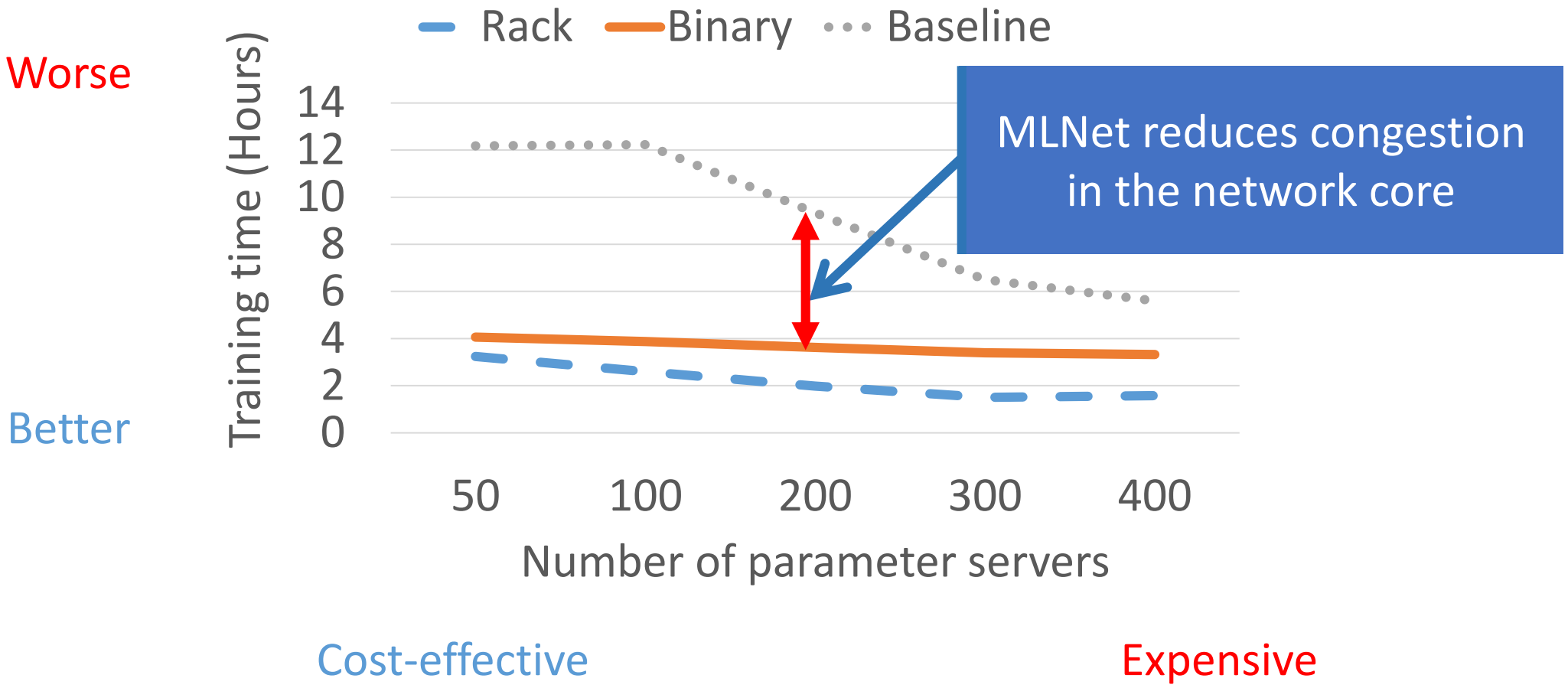

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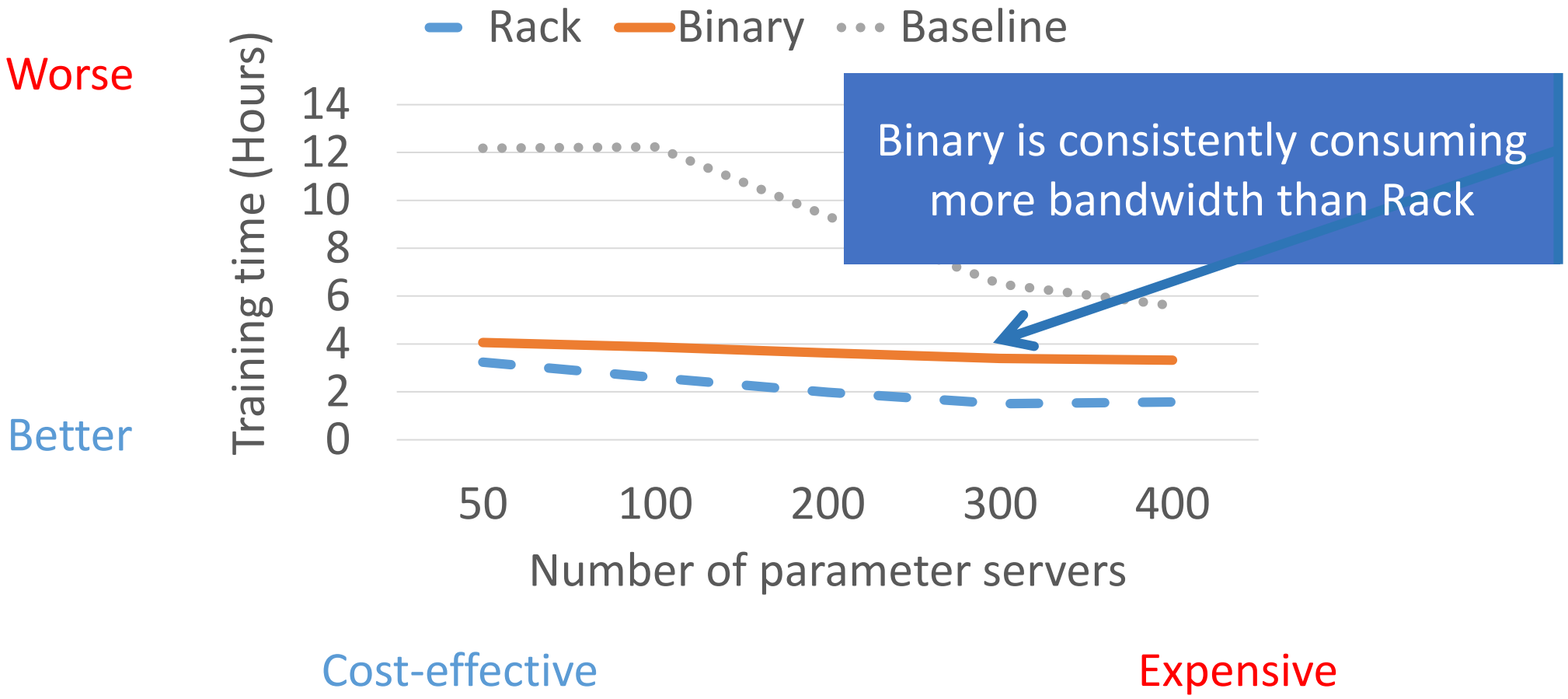
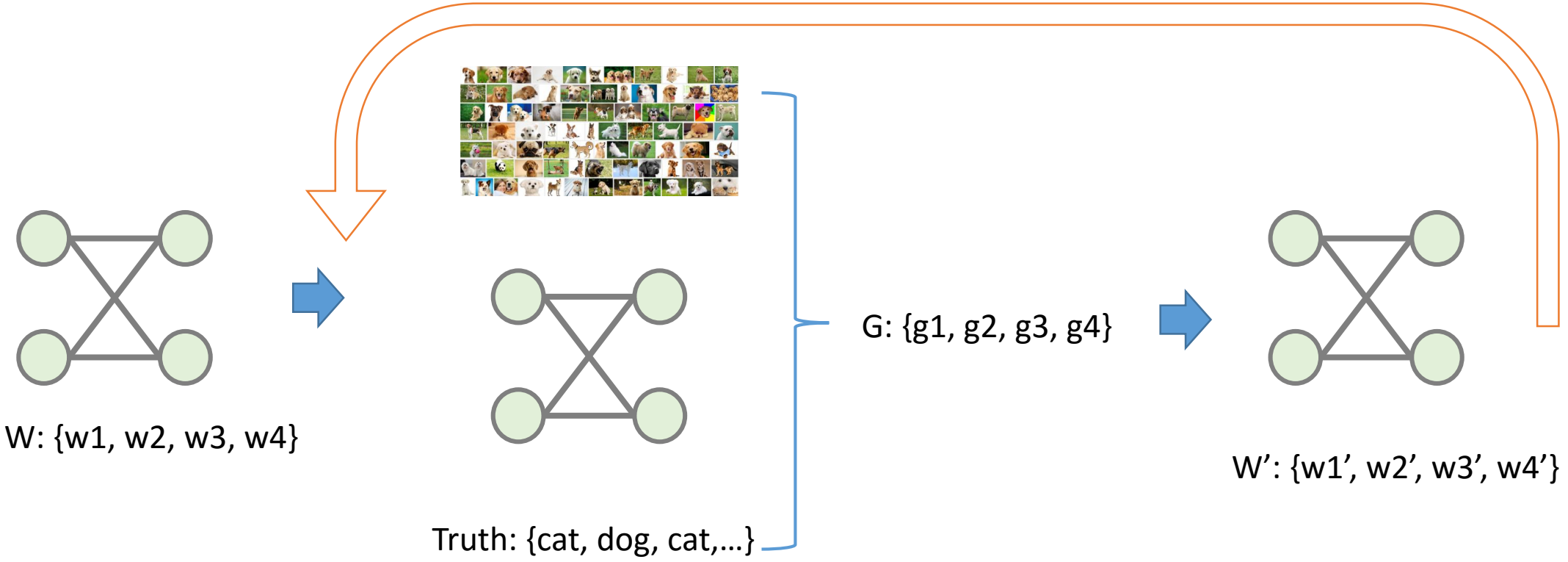


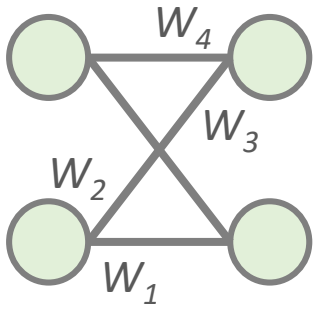
Example: Training a Neural Network



Example: Neural Network



Model



Train



Apply

Dog : 99%

Cat : 1%

Model Training

