

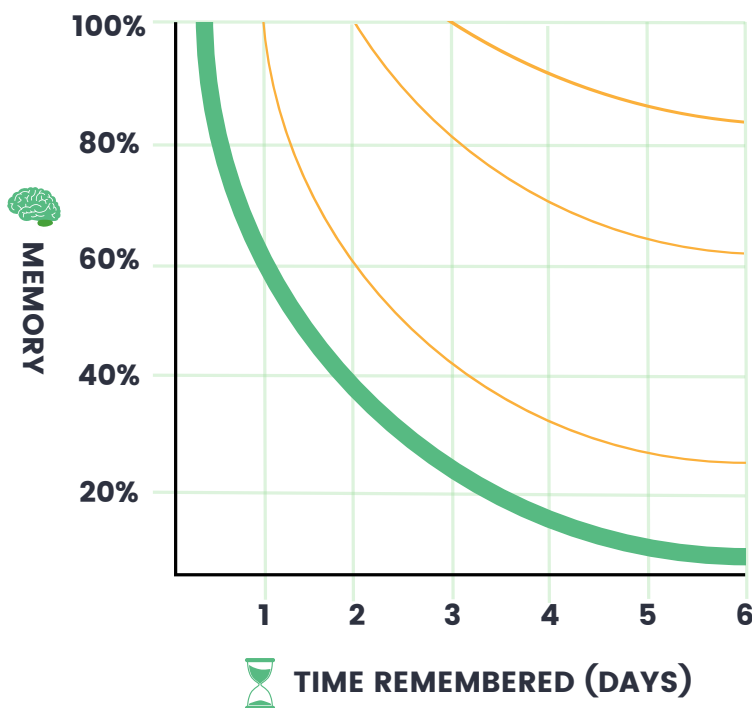


Inverting the Forgetting Curve

BY CHRISTINE KHOR, CEO AND FOUNDER OF PEEPLCOACH

The forgetting curve is a mathematically validated equation developed by Hermann Ebbinghaus (1) in 1885 that tracks the rate of forgetting of information that is not actively retained. Since 1885 there have been many more studies that have found that we can forget up to 50% of new information within an hour and 70% within 24 hours of learning it.

With tightening budgets, under-resourced teams and continued business complexity, it is essential for organisations and human resources professionals to ensure that any money spent on learning and development delivers a quantifiable return on investment. Below are our top tips for ensuring that content delivered through learning and development programs is retained.



1. Information should be presented in bite-sized and digestible units.

The average attention span is 8.25 seconds, and it becomes lower the younger you are. Why? We are so distracted by technology and the demands of the world in general, jumping from one call, email or activity to another, that focus is becoming a forgotten art.

Whether you're reading, watching or listening to it, educational and training content should be accessible on the run, between five to ten minutes in length and interesting! Jargon and overly complex concepts should be avoided.

2. Content should be customisable and individually relevant.

The trend towards information on demand and gamification is putting additional pressure on learning and development providers to offer customisable, relevant and 'what's in it for me?' learning.

We do not all learn the same way, at the same pace or with the same examples or approach. For learning to be effective and embedded, any development program must include a 1:1 component to allow for different learning styles and retention rates.

Beyond the standard visual, verbal, kinaesthetic and auditory learning styles, we need to consider the type of information, context and timing.

3. Learning should involve real play role plays.

Interactive and practical, real play activities are essential to embedding learning. If you want to improve presentation skills then make sure participants have to present to a group and are given timely and constructive feedback. If you want to improve problem-solving skills, provide a tangible and relevant example for participants to workshop and learn from.

4. Learning should incorporate the 3 Rs of retention.

The process of remembering involves three simple steps – remember, recall and retain. Research has proven that if you are made to recall and recite information you are more likely to remember and retain it. Making notes, completing exercises, sharing and learning are critical to the process of retention.

5. Consistency and frequency need to be maintained.

Regular and consistent learning in bite-sized units is more effective than intense learning inconsistently. A few hours a week or a month over six to twelve months is more productive than a three-day intensive.

6. Content should be relatable.

We remember more when we can relate to the information we're being told. Story-telling is essential here but so too is finding relevant problems and solutions. If you are trying to train a group to improve their commercial and financial skills but they don't have any contact with or understanding of the business profit and loss statement or how revenue is generated then it is very unlikely that the information will be retained.

7. There needs to be a safe space for learning.

Workplaces, industry and the world in general are competitive, and none of us want to broadcast that we don't understand or are confused. Learners need to have a safe environment in which to share concerns, question concepts, experiment and fail.

8. Accessibility must be prioritised.

Learning must be easy to access and to understand. Today's employees demand easy-to-understand, simple-to-implement tools and tips to help them do their job better. Learning and content management systems and on-demand, just-in-time resources are essential to create engagement and continuous learning. Also, content written in everyday language rather than hieroglyphics is far more beneficial to learners.

9. Training should be scalable.

Organisational capability and growth can only occur when there is momentum, and momentum cannot happen when there are only one, two or ten leaders who are educated and developed. Consider how your programs can create momentum at scale and with a core of agitators.

10. Learning must take place in the right environment.

Training and development can only be embedded and deliver true ROI when there is an environment that allows development and growth. The saying 'the fish rots from the head' is relevant here. If you do not have genuine support, commitment, investment and the desire to change from all levels in the organisation then effective learning and change will never be embedded.

Sources

- [5 Ways to Challenge the Forgetting Curve](#)
- [Attention Span](#)



At Peepcoach we have embedded all these learnings into our programs for maximum impact.

We offer:

- bite-sized content and exercises
- modular and customisable programs
- 1:1 and group coaching
- accessible pricing and accessible concepts
- development over six to twelve months.
-

If you would like to find out how we are delivering impact and embedding learning, please contact us here.



ABOUT CHRISTINE

Christine Khor is CEO and Founder of Peepcoach who, over the last 20+ years as both an executive coach and executive recruiter, has partnered with hundreds of organisations and thousands of individual leaders to accelerate their personal, professional and business impact and success. Christine is the author of the book *Hire Love* and has been named a finalist for the Telstra Business Women of the Year Awards, the CEO Magazine Entrepreneur of the Year Awards and the B&T Women in Tech Awards. Peepcoach was also named among the Top 100 Fast Starters in the Australian Financial Review for 2023.

