

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 357 Why Do I Forget Things I Just Learned? – Part 1

It happens to business people, and it happens to students. It leads to major confusion and frustration. What is it? I'm Jerry Roberts and today we look at the phenomenon of learning that seems to just disappear. Why do we forget so quickly and what can we do about it? That's what we're getting into, right now, on The Extra Point.

For the majority of people, information gained quickly becomes information lost. We read a book, take a course, and soon afterwards we find that what we learned begins to slip away.

This problem has a name, *the forgetting curve*, popularized by a German psychologist, Hermann Ebbinghaus. The curve is steepest right off the bat, day one, as our memory starts to lose chunks of data if there is no review of the material learned. Within several days, most of it is gone.

Has it always been this way? Probably, but the issue of rapid memory loss of data we recently took in is said to have changed in the last couple of decades, courtesy of the Internet. Some researchers believe that since the Web has become this massive repository for information, and it's always there — and we figure it always will be there — we may have subconsciously, maybe consciously, signed off on the need to remember things.

Think about that. Why should I bother to work hard to remember something when I can just browse to it the next time I need that particular information? This is termed *recognition memory*, the ability to know what I need and where to find it.

This has become the new normal. In past years I would download information, coming back to it for consumption. More often these days, I just copy the link or bookmark the page.

I don't know if it's affected my recall ability. I recognize that it's certainly possible.

Binge-watchers beware. An Australian university study found that people who watched an entire season of a TV show forgot the content of them much more quickly than people who watched one episode a week. Quizzed a few months later, the bingers scored lower on retention than did the weekly watchers.

Students who try to cram a semester's worth of knowledge into their head the night before the final exam, rarely succeed.

Yesterday, Ray mentioned the inability to remember a person's name, virtually seconds after hearing it for the first time. Has it ever happened to you, where you've just learned the name and you're having a chat with them, but you've already forgotten their name? I'll admit it.

It's not an age issue because it happens to the young as well. It affects every generation and it has definitely gone viral. I said this condition has a name and now I've been talking for two minutes. Do you remember that name or have you already forgotten it? It's the "forgetting curve."

So, would you like a little help in how to absorb information and have a better chance for it to stick? That's for tomorrow, so remember to be here...7:20...don't forget.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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