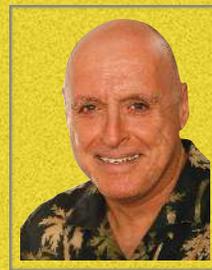


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



358 Why Do I Forget Things I Just Learned? — Part 2

Yesterday, we discussed the very common issue of forgetting information soon after we learn it. Today, we explore solutions. I'm Jerry Roberts and are there ways we can help our memory retain the information we want to keep for the long term? We'll find out next, on The Extra Point.

If you didn't pick up on part one of this topic, download the transcript at guamtraining.com, number 357. Today, I'll reveal a few ideas we can use to keep information in our memory, and available when we want it. Let's get to it.

1. To put off the *forgetting curve* we talked about yesterday, where data is lost almost as soon as we take it in, one strategy is to refresh the information as soon as possible.

In my training courses I ask students to go back over their notes and all materials given within the first 24 hours. This is important for two reasons. It reinforces what was learned, and also allows the user to reread the notes they made and if they're having trouble with what they scribbled down, it's new enough that they'll likely be able to figure it out.

After the first 24 hours I suggest they go back over everything a week later, and to do that a few more times. The act of revisiting a course several times allows us to drive the information further into our long term memory.

This works in the same way when we're reading a non-fiction book, such as for our personal development. I read it once and highlight the parts I want to remember. Then, I reread the book several times, but just the highlighted areas. The original reading may have required five or six hours, but the rereads often take no more than 20 or 30 minutes.

2. If there are a number of important ideas that I want to be able to recall, I'll sometimes put

those on flashcards. The point here is to write a key phrase or perhaps a couple of key words on one side of the card, then your description or explanation on the other. It's a little bit of a game, to see if someone were to give me the key words or phrase, how much would I be able to tell them?

3. The third strategy takes a little longer but if you can harness it, I think it can be big winner. Here's the basic concept: information is best retained when it's meaningful for us. If we can't find meaning, then it's nothing but random facts and theories. What is the trainer, the TV documentary, the book...trying to tell me? How does this tie in with me, my job, my life?

When we connect the meaning in what we learn to the meaningful things in our life, that's when information sticks. We've now sent a signal to our memory to grab this data and store it for future use.

4. Step four is implementation and the best way to make sure the information remains with you. Use it. My trainings include an action plan where students identify the parts of the course which best resonated with them. If they picked 20 ideas I have them focus on three to start, then one to take action on. They can come back for more after they get going with the first. Implementation is the ultimate strategy to make sure we don't lose what we've learned. Grab transcript number 358 and see if these ideas help you to retain more information.

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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