

# LEARNING



Research tells us that we forget: 40% of what we hear in 20 minutes;  
60% of what we hear in ½ day;  
90% of what we hear in 1 week!

This is the “learning curve”.

What does it mean to us? It shows how ineffective a straight lecture really is. It shows why “telling somebody what to do” is extremely ineffective. It tells us why, even though it may be a topic we are interested in, we cannot remember most of what the lecture was about.

It is proof of our inability to effectively communicate in a one-to-one situation without additional aid.

Remember this when you wish to communicate your thoughts and ideas to somebody else. A straight lecture on your part won't work!

Remember this when somebody is communicating his thoughts to you.

How can we increase the capacity to retain information?

1. By developing the ability to listen. Listen to not only what is being said, but to how it is being said.
2. By taking (or passing out) notes. The writing gives us something else to do. The writing process helps solidify the ideas. Having the notes allows us to review. Going over the ideas soon helps us to retain them more easily.

It takes us 6 exposures to retain 62% of our ideas.

3. With involvement. When you are talking, encourage participation. Get questions from your listener. Ask him if he understands your concepts and ideas. Ask for an illustration. Get him involved.

The question mark is far mightier than the exclamation point!

4. Talk benefits. (Yes, just like in selling...why not? You are trying to “sell” your idea, aren't you?) Why should the listener listen to you anyway? Give him a “What's in it for me?” reason. This will get him more involved and make your communication more effective.

What does this mean to you here? Take more notes. Any questions. Challenge yourself to mastering the idea. Develop an idea and ask the speaker if you are on the right track.

When you are talking, encourage note taking, questions and participation. Have notes summarizing what you covered.

Using these ideas can help you to improve on the “learning curve”.