



## The Coaching Habit®

# Why Learning Fades Fast — and What the Data Tells Us

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You've seen it happen: a team goes through a workshop, there's a burst of energy, a few new phrases echo in meetings for a week or two... and then? Things go back to how they were. That's not because the content wasn't good—it might have been great. It's because real behaviour change doesn't happen in a single sitting. It happens over time, through repetition, reflection, and workplace application.

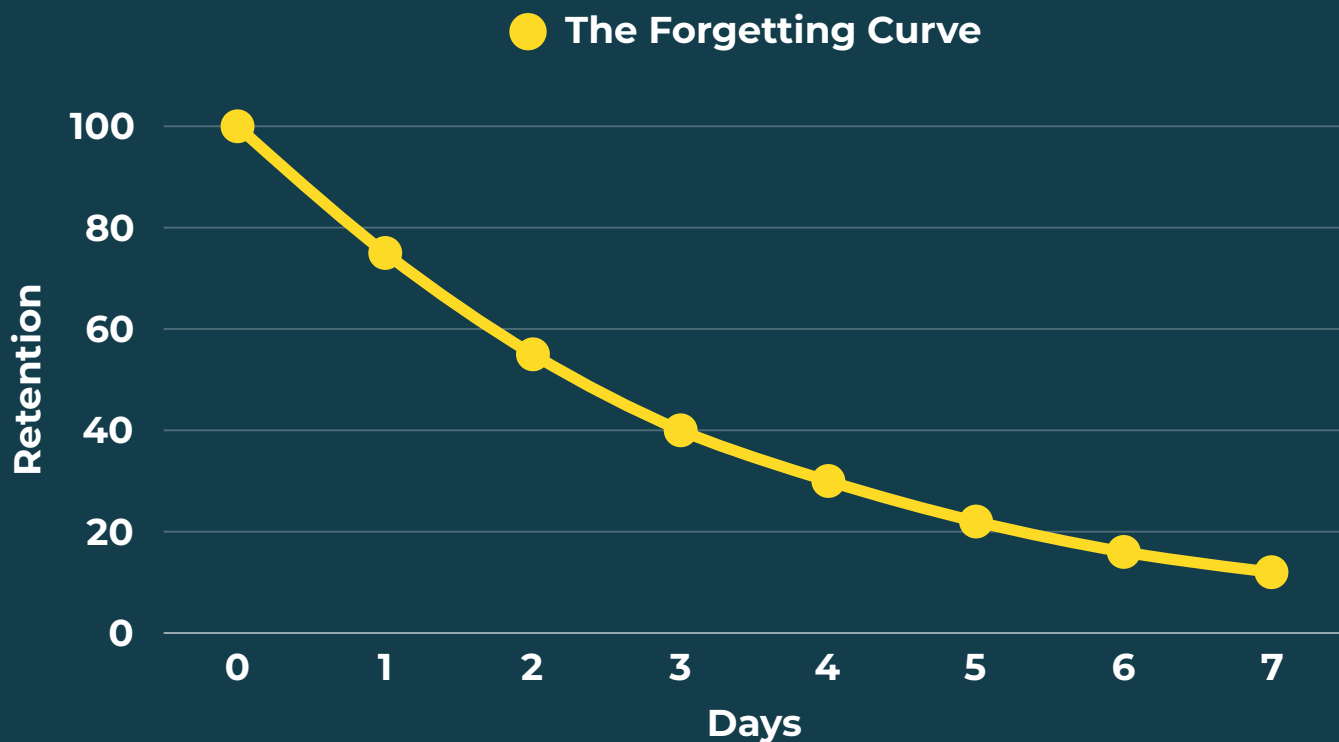
**The Coaching Habit Learning Journey** was built with those principles at its core. It's designed to turn insights into action and action into lasting habits. Here's why that matters—and how it works.

## 1. People Forget—Quickly

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The science is clear: when people are exposed to new information just once, they quickly forget most of it. This phenomenon was first documented by German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885, who developed the Forgetting Curve—a visual representation showing that memory retention drops steeply within the first 24 hours without reinforcement, and continues to decline rapidly over subsequent days.

Even the most compelling, useful content can't stick if it's not revisited. That's a problem for L&D teams looking to create lasting impact.



Repetition helps encode information more deeply, moving it from short-term memory into long-term retention (Baddeley, 1997; Soderstrom & Bjork, 2015), and lays the groundwork for habit formation through consistent retrieval and application (Karpicke & Roediger, 2008; Wood & Neal, 2007). This is what ensures learners remember and apply key behaviours when it matters most—whether in a high-stakes meeting, a difficult conversation, or a critical leadership moment.

## 2. Workplace Learning Only Matters If It's Used

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It's easy to assume that if someone understands a concept, they'll apply it. Unfortunately, that's not how behaviour change works. Knowing alone isn't enough. The Fogg Behavior Model (2009) shows that forming new habits requires consistent repetition in real-life situations. People don't change just because they know something; they change because they do it, over and over, until it becomes second nature in real contexts.

The Learning Journey was designed with this in mind. Instead of encouraging learners to "learn and leave," it creates space for them to practice new behaviours inside the work they're already doing—the 1:1s, the team meetings, the feedback sessions. Each touchpoint is grounded in the real world, so learners can experiment, reflect, and try again—building capability by doing, not just remembering.

### **3. Lasting Change Needs More Than Good Intentions**

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Most L&D teams launch a program with high hopes—because the business is motivated. There's urgency. There's a clear mandate: "We need people to lead differently." But organizational motivation doesn't always translate into learner motivation. And even when learners are motivated, it's rarely enough to create lasting change on its own.

Work gets busy. People get pulled in other directions. Without a structure that keeps the learning alive—through feedback, practice, peer connection, and reinforcement—motivation fizzles.

Learning Journeys offer a scaffold for sustained growth. Built around the Box of Crayons proprietary ASK model: Awareness, Skill-building, and Keeping it Up, the journey is structured to support learners across time. In the Awareness stage, managers gain clarity about what needs to change and why. As they move into the Skill-building stage, they get feedback, nudges, and space to refine their approach. In the final phase, Keeping it Up, they get the support they need to keep going, with tools to maintain progress and adapt as their context shifts.

## 4. If They Don't See The Point, They Don't Stay Engaged

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L&D leaders know this well: the biggest blocker to engagement isn't resistance—it's irrelevance. If learners can't connect the training to something that matters to them, they check out. You might get compliance, but you won't get commitment. That's the WIIFM problem: "What's in it for me?"

Most workshops try to address this with a motivational intro and a few case studies. Then they move on—leaving learners behind. **The Coaching Habit Learning Journey** takes a different approach. It starts with relevance and keeps returning to it.

Learners are asked early on to link the new behaviours to their own leadership goals, their day-to-day challenges, and the outcomes they care about. That makes the learning personal, not theoretical.

This approach is grounded in Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which shows that lasting motivation doesn't come from pressure or persuasion—it comes from autonomy, competence, and connection. When learning feels relevant and self-directed, people stay with it—not because they have to, but because they want to.

And once they see the point, they're more likely to stay with it. Reflection prompts, peer conversations, and real-time feedback help them track their own growth. The result isn't just engagement—it's ownership. When learners believe the learning is for them, not just about them, motivation stops being something you have to spark. It becomes something they carry forward.

## 5. Change Needs Time to Breathe

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Learning isn't linear, and neither is growth. One of the most overlooked aspects of behaviour change is reflection—the opportunity to pause, assess, and adjust. Traditional training often skips this step in the rush to cover more content.

Reflection is built into every phase of the Learning Journey. Whether it's a journal prompt, a coaching moment, or a debrief with peers, learners are invited to step back and make sense of what they're experiencing. That reflection strengthens their understanding, helps them course-correct, and deepens their commitment to the new behaviours they're practicing.

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## Learning That Works

If your goal is real capability, one-and-done training isn't enough. **The Coaching Habit Learning Journey** offers a structure that turns insight into action, and action into habit. It's a practical, scalable, human approach to leadership development—one that respects how people really learn, change, and grow.



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