

# LEAN LEARNING

## WHITE PAPER

DISRUPTING THE FUTURE OF LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT



# MEET CHOOSE TO GROW



Top performing organisations such as Pharmaceuticals, Business Media, Purpose Led Housing, Care Providers, Financial Services, Engineering & Manufacturing have all used our High Impact Learning Model that consists of Lean, Bite-size & Micro content to achieve major organisational challenges over the past 5 years such as:

- Building a high-performance culture (Olympus)
- Delivering major productivity gains with more effective managers (Otsuka)
- Turning around employee engagement (Bron Afon)
- Transforming customer service (Alliance Homes Group)
- Managing the human aspect of major re-organisations so they deliver on well-being & resilience (Pobl)

In 2020, we will deliver lean learning to over 2000 leaders, managers and individual team members who will take part in a Choose to Grow High Impact Learning experience delivered by one of 10 qualified L&D Business Partners across the UK.

## We transform performance by changing the way people learn & think.

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# OUR BELIEFS



## We believe that 5 minutes with a genius beats a month with a fool.

We carefully select the right delivery team, the right content and deliver it in the right way. We have an extensive portfolio of diverse skills within our team and all our deliverers are highly skilled in delivering our methodology. This consists of pre and post module micro content and multiple 90 minute mind workouts. This is then supported by a blend of action learning and coaching.



## Neuroscience is sexy and in research we trust.

Everything we deliver is evidence based, drawing on the latest and the best psychology, behavioural studies and neuroscience. We scrutinise everything like a hawk, so if something isn't working then we change it.



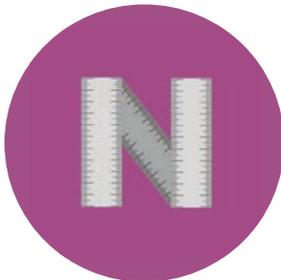
## We choose to grow and develop much more than we realise.

At the core of our ethos is the transformation and movement of performance by changing the way people think and learn through choices. Instead of taking learners from A to B, our lean approach takes learners from A to options. That's how we make an impact.



## People only change and develop when it's in their best interest.

Lean sessions are targeted and action focused. This way, people change because they want to, not because the organisation they work for demands it of them.



## One size fit's no one!

By mixing learning disciplines with bite-size approaches, learners feast on the skills, tools & techniques that they believe will help them most, in a learning environment that's right for them.



## We prescribe little and often.

Goal orientated practice is the key to making learning stick in organisations. Application 'back at work' increases to 85% when people discover a little at a time, giving them the chance to practice in between.



# IN A NUTSHELL

We have been learning in bite-sized chunks for centuries, plays, piano lessons, pub quizzes, YouTube & Netflix so why should training at work be any different? Well, it shouldn't. When it comes to changing behaviour and achieving business goals, bite-size is most definitely the right size.

## HERE IS HOW

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For individual learners, this learning cycle consists of three phases: **Engage.** Learners who are psychologically engaged take in more and are more likely to apply it. By whetting learners' appetites through clever marketing there is no need to cajole people into attending. **Participate.** Drawing on scientific principles about the way people learn, bite-size sessions get to the learning outcome faster, appeal to self-interest and break down abstract business goals into practical tools that can be put into practice immediately. **Activate.** Meaningful content and brain friendly activities mean less mental effort to put learning into action. The distributed, bite-size cycle is cleverly designed to make the most of the learning experience, achieving 55% greater benefits without blowing the learning & development budget. The latest reading in neuro studies and psychological research, as well as our own experience reveal how lean learning now makes business sense.

## HERE IS WHY

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The traditional approach to training, where we focus our time and energy on the event and helping people learn, isn't working. It's expensive, time consuming and, most of all, has little impact. We have a transfer rate of 35% and the industry norm is fewer than 15% of participants successfully applying what they learn. No wonder personal development is often put on the back burner. The bite-size approach focuses not on helping people learn but on helping them solve problems in the real world. Transfer, not the event, is the hero. It targets not just the learners but their managers, peers and the cultural context in which they apply what they learn, so it's almost impossible not to put new skills into glorious practice.

# LEAN MEANS LESS

If there was any other business process that could be changed to save 50% of people's time without any adverse effects, it would be done immediately.

Here's how lean delivers more for less:

## It capitalises on the Pareto principle:

The vital few for the busy many. The '80-20' rule has been observed in all sorts of domains: 80% of revenue comes from 20% of customers, 20% of patients use 80% of healthcare resources, and so on. Training is no exception. By focusing on the most relevant 20% of learning and practice, the bite-size approach yields 80% of the results. Any longer spent in training and the return on time invested starts to diminish.

## Learning is little and often.

Short, regular periods of high-intensity exercise get you fitter quicker than endurance training; eating little and often keeps you slimmer and, likewise, distributed lean learning helps you to remember and apply much more.

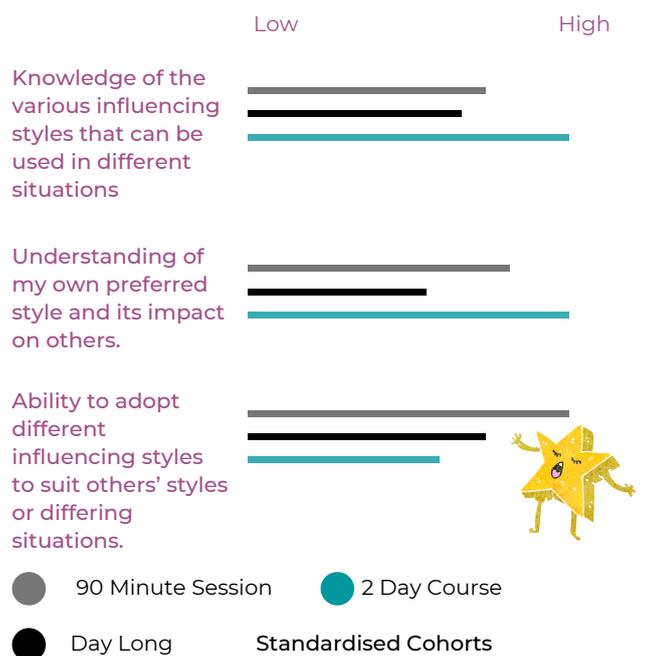
## It's easier to create long-term memories

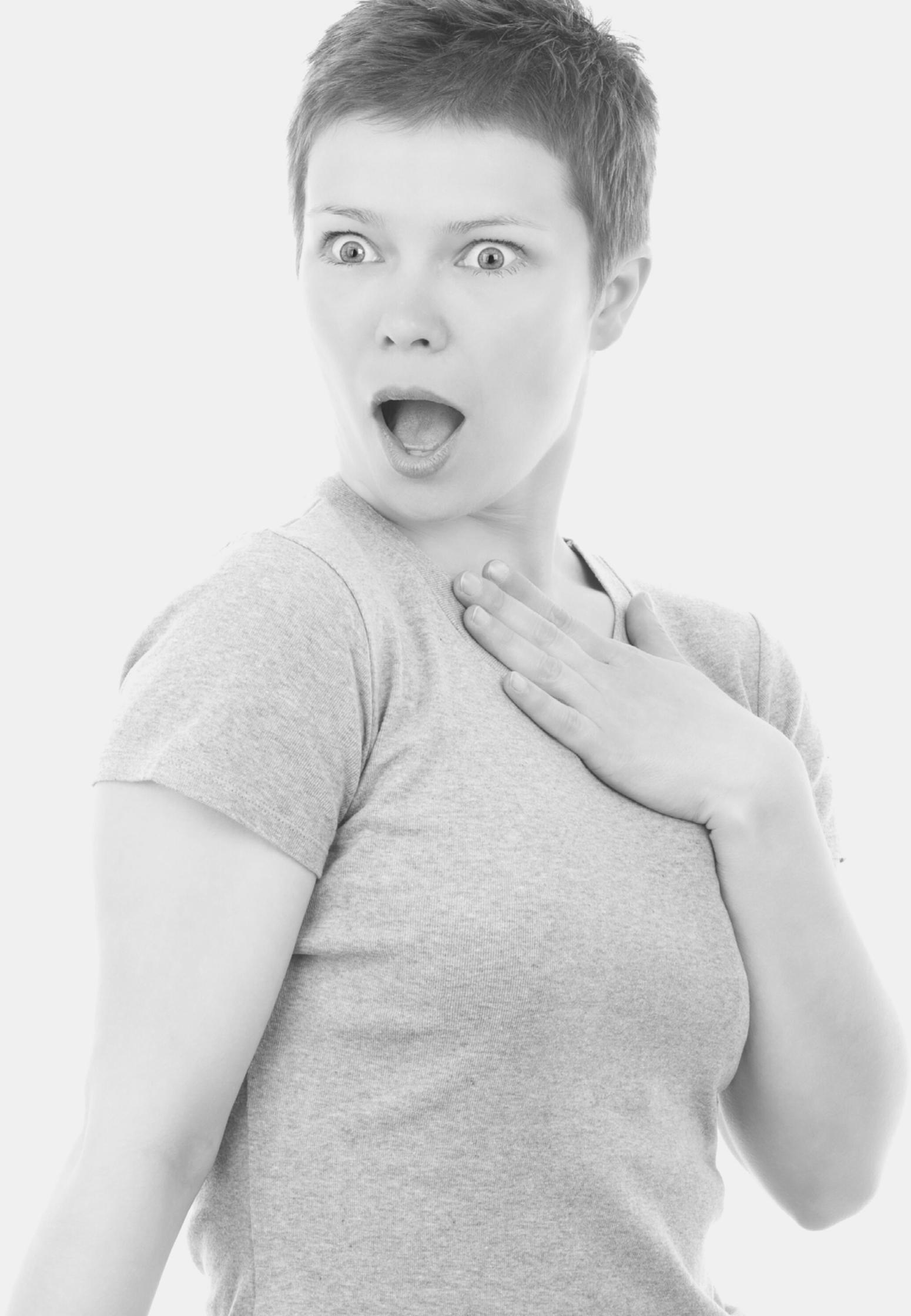
when you learn things in chunks rather than all at once. Think gym versus health spa. A short workout once a week for a couple of months is better for your health than a crash weekend of raspberries and reflexology – even though they both take up the same total amount of time.

Lean learning makes good business sense – it produces greater transfer, is quicker and delivers almost twice the ROI of a traditional approach.

## CASE STUDY

The BBC independently compared the impact of a 90-minute session with a day-long intervention. The bite-size session delivered a greater improvement than the day-long course.





# IT DOESN'T END THERE



## IT'S EASIER TO ATTEND

The flexible and convenient nature of bite-size means it can be tailored according to your schedule. It can even be slotted on the end of a regular meeting – everyone's already there so why not do some learning together?

## TIME V COST OPPORTUNITY

Because its only 90 minutes no need to seek cover, and attendance is high as people can afford to take that amount of time away from the job. Taking people out for days at a time means lost productivity and a significant opportunity cost. A bite-size approach is much less disruption – rather than finding someone to cover the work or losing the opportunities altogether, people simply make up for lost time.

## TARGETED BUT FLEXIBLE

In volatile times training is often the first to go out of panic or capacity constraint, when often its the support or the solution required to navigate the white waters. Changes in strategy can often change the focus mid programme and current desired capabilities are quickly outdated. The traditional approach to learning is slow to respond to this, as long periods of design just don't cut it anymore and they often miss the boat. A bite-size, rapid prototyping approach means just-in-time design and development, making the intervention context-relevant and contemporary.



# VALUE PROPOSITION

	TRADITIONAL APPROACH	LEAN APPROACH
INTERVENTION	1 DAY SKILLS TRAINING (9 HOURS AWAY FROM THE JOB)	2 X 90 MINUTE WORKSHOPS 2 X 30 MINUTE TRANSFER TASKS 1 X 90 MINUTE BOOSTER SESSION
SALARY & TIME COST	20 DELEGATES AVERAGE £15PH £2700	20 DELEGATES AVERAGE £15PH £1650
DELIVERY COST	20 DELEGATES £1400-£3000	20 DELEGATES £1450-£2450
TOTAL COSTS	£4100-£5700	£3100-£4100
BENEFIT	75%	90%
ROI**	1.3	2.2

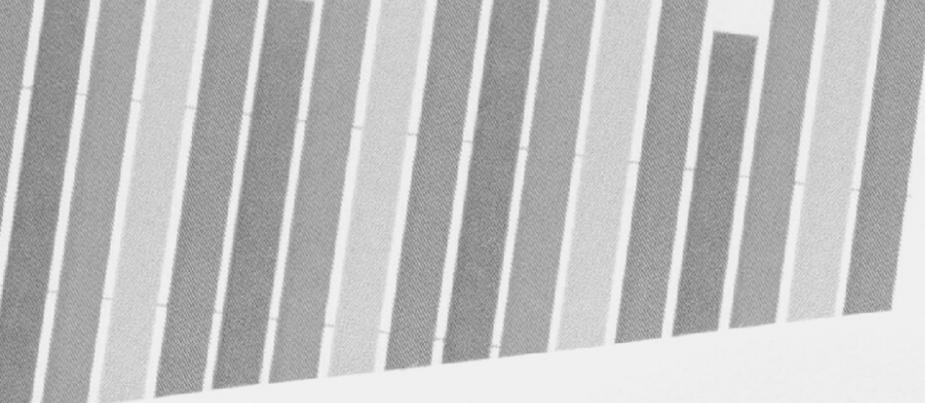
\*\*ROI calculated on basis of benefit divided by investment multiplied by 100

CIPD 2012 - 35% retention

Based on multiple lean sessions held at one venue or virtually

## LEAN IS CHEAPER, BETTER, NO SERIOUSLY CHEAPER & BETTER

It's commonly accepted that learning three things from a day's course is a good result. But considering the four or five things on average taken from a series of lean learning workshops, then lean gives you a better result for half the cost of employees' time. And that's without taking into account the savings in venue rental, travel, refreshments, and so forth. Overall, this equates to almost double the return on investment (see above).



84.42  
712.65  
56.3~



# WHATS GOING ON?

Despite our best intentions, behaviour change after learning remains remarkably low. We think there are seven reasons why...

## 1. WE BELIEVE THAT LONGER = BETTER

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Prevailing wisdom dictates the longer we spend in training, the better. Not only is this false, it's irrational. Just as travellers prefer reaching their destination faster, learning quality should be judged by outcome, not length. But when budgets are set by hours of training per employee, it's a hard habit to break.

## 2. THE INTERVENTION IS THE HERO

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We invest the majority of our time, energy and money into organising & measuring the intervention. But according to research - development programmes fail because of poor event design less than 20 percent of the time. More than 80 percent of the time, failure is due to poor upfront engagement and poor sustainment afterwards.

## 3. WE DESIGN FOR THE OUTLAW

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Training designers cater for the, the biggest sceptic and the greatest collaborator. Learning becomes bloated, lethargic, crammed with answers to every imaginable question. As a result all but one participant will be bored, all but one mind underused.

## 4. ONE SIZE FITS NO ONE

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Everyone shows up and goes through the same agenda - no matter how different their prior experience, individual personalities or current work challenges. It's the reverse of the 80: 20 principle; each individual spends just 20 percent of the whole day on things that matter to them.

## 5. WE ONLY TARGET THE LEARNER

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Like schools focusing on the knowledge necessary to pass an exam instead of preparing for later life, training sessions focus only on the individuals doing the learning with little consideration for the wider context in which they will apply what they learn. So, it's more difficult for them to transfer that learning to the workplace.

## 6. WE MISCALCULATE THE COST

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The cost of change is sometimes cited as a barrier to moving to a learner approach. But typically this calculation ignores the most significant cost – the participants' time. As demonstrated earlier, the reduced participant time and greater impact of a lean approach delivers nearly double the ROI of traditional approaches.

## 7. WE STICK TO WHAT WE KNOW

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Until the 1990s, most training followed a behaviourist approach, focused on task. This was followed by a learner-centred, cognitive approach, using simulations and role plays to help people apply their learning in daily life. More recently, the learning world has favoured a social learning approach that encourages communities of practice and collaboration. But no matter what is the new black, there is no single best approach. We need a fourth generation, integrative model that draws on the best parts of each method to meet the needs of the particular group and situation.



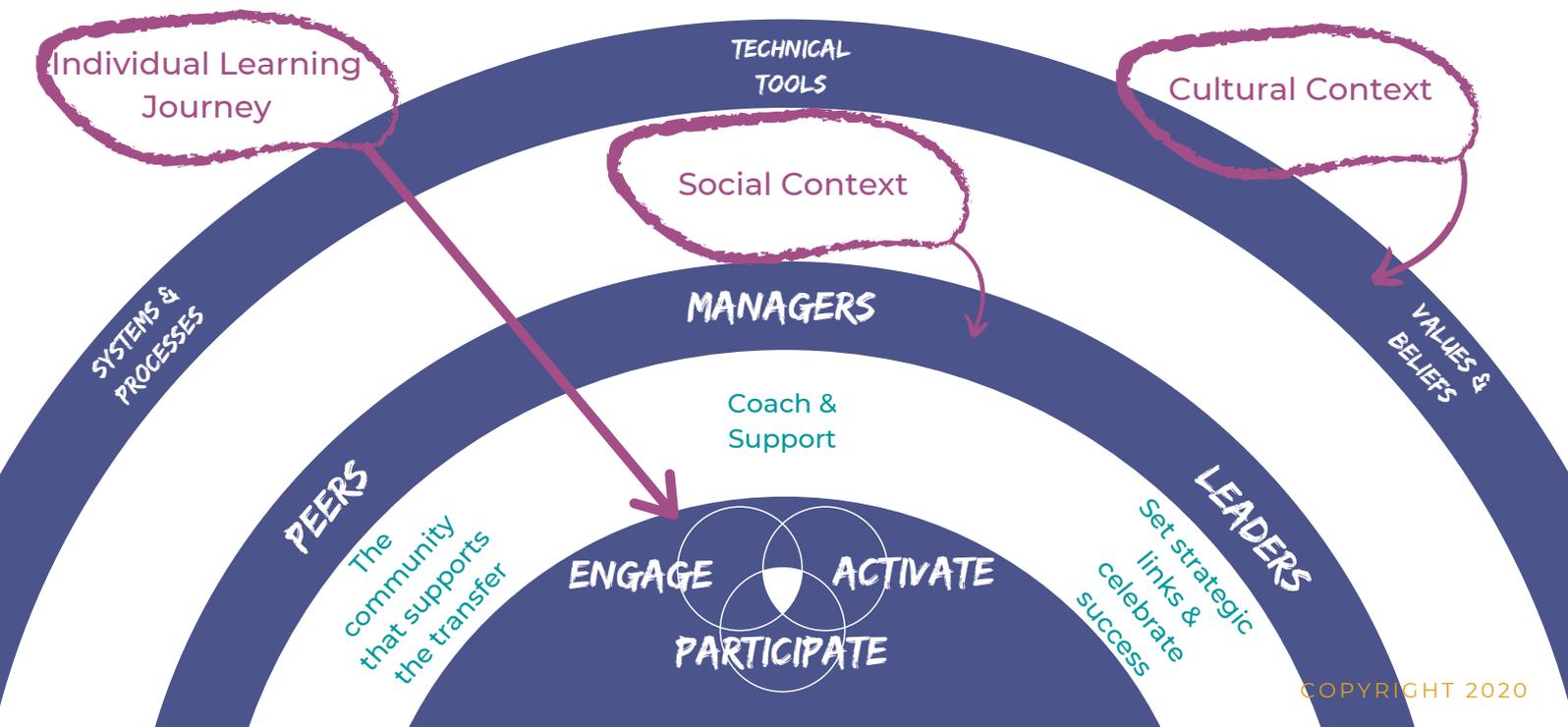
# WHAT MAKES LEAN LEARNING STICK?



Turn learning into action by tapping into the scientific principles of behaviour change.



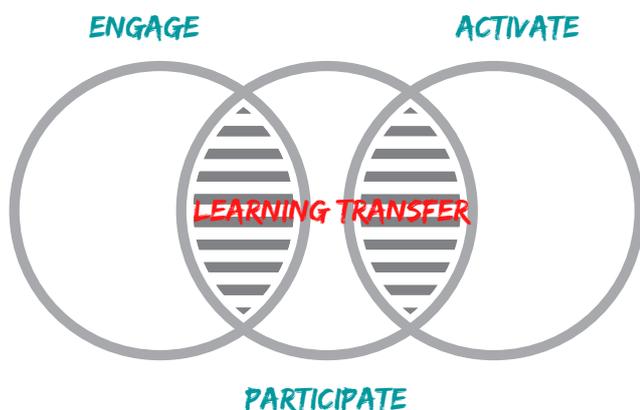
What's the difference between a bite-size Snickers bar and a normal Snickers bar? Simply that one is smaller than the other. Some people think lean learning is the same: that it involves taking a day's worth of content and chopping it into smaller sections. This is a misunderstanding. The bite-size methodology is about much more than shorter courses (although quick and targeted does play a part). The lean methodology is based on rigorous psychological and business research about the way people learn and, importantly, what makes that learning stick. After all, it's only when learning translates to action that a return on investment is realised. The methodology has two core components: the individual participants' learning journey and the broader social and cultural context in which they apply that learning, as illustrated below.



# HOW TO MAKE THE LEARNING STICK

What practices lead to learning transfer? I ask myself this question every time I design an intervention for a client. It is the Holy Grail for any Organisational Development Professional. It's also this question that any training provider worth their salt would lose sleep over as the element that sets you apart from the rest in the market place.

To make learning stick, we have had to move from a 'before, during, and after,' session framework to one that is focused and based on participants. And that's exactly what lean learning does. The lean learning framework is a continuous cycle of three distinct phases as illustrated below and explored further in the pages that follow.



Participation here doesn't need to be in the training room itself; it could just as easily be informal learning, with no need to define boundaries.

## DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

As many as 90% of learning participants have little idea why they're at a session or what value it adds to them or their organisation. When a typical learner is asked why he or she is participating, the typical answer that comes back is: "Because my manager told me I had to." Some learners will see the personal gains and give you a great example of why they want to explore the topic but it is rare. It is even more frustrating for the dedicated L&D person who has commissioned us as they have worked so hard to find the right provider but then the launch is poorly attended. Capturing the hearts and minds in the run up to the session is just as vital for the transfer as the magic content itself. We advocate a 'Discovery' phase to do the work on this upfront.



## DEEPEN PARTICIPATION

Unfortunately for fitness fanatics, being motivated to get stronger or leaner isn't enough – you also have to put in the hard yards. Likewise with training at work: to take away something of value, engaged learners need to completely immerse themselves in the content.

Lean learning gives participants the physical and psychological energy to completely immerse themselves by taking away the boredom typically associated with long training sessions. Lean Learning takes advantage of three scientifically grounded instructional design principles to develop an environment where people actively take part. Just like an intensive fitness class where attendees can't help but break a sweat – only with less Lycra.

### MAKE IT MICRO

We don't need to spend hours in the training room to create a learning experience with a lasting impact. By combining short, sharp bursts of energy with just the right amount of reflection time, you can trigger the light-bulb moments that challenge the way people think and ultimately change the way they behave. Lean sessions trim out all the fat – no bloated models just accessible scientific theories, key facts and relevant information. We assume the 'why it matters' and go straight to 'how', finding solutions to specific questions, without the hypothesising. We tell first and discuss later. There's no time to play 'guess the answer'. Bite-size sessions also take advantage of what we know about our natural energy ebb and flow, called 'ultradian rhythms'. After 90 to 120 minutes, our alertness dwindles and we crave rest and recharge. We start staring out of the window and thinking about lunch. Anything we try to learn in this time is lost. Lean learning optimises our natural learning rhythms, using the 90/20/8 rule.

### KEEP IN CONTEXT

In bite-size, if content is king, then context is the emperor. Our job as learning professionals isn't to help participants learn; it's to help them solve real-world problems. So the starting point for design should be what you want people to do when they leave. It doesn't matter how innovative the design or revolutionary the technology; if it's not useful, relevant or timely, it will deliver little or no value. Of course, we can't ignore the business outputs we want to achieve. The trick is to find a balance between what learners need and what the business expects.

To make sure we're tapping into both business and individual drivers, we need to think about the desired impact at five different levels – from immediate learner reaction through to return on investment for the business. This is exactly what happens in contextualised lean learning: we establish the business context, recognise what this looks like from the learners' perspective, and break down abstract skills and competencies into practical tools and techniques. The result? An intervention that's focused and targeted, satisfied learners, and better business outcomes.

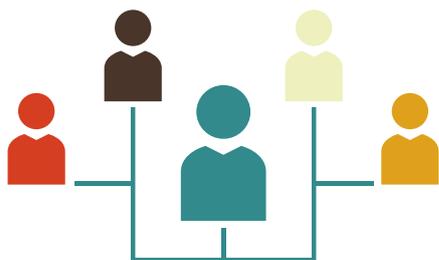
**It goes something like this: no module ever runs more than 90 minutes, the pace is changed at least every 20 minutes, and people are involved in the content every 8 minutes. That's how learning stays lean.**



## DON'T FORGET TO TAILOR IT

Learners are more engaged when they feel that the learning is relevant and personalised. One size fits no one. But providing options for every eventuality would be overwhelming, not to mention time-consuming and costly to develop. In a learning programme, we can't (and shouldn't) offer all things to all people. Lean Learning allows us to provide choice that resonates, while delivering at scale. It's called 'mass customisation' and mimics the Starbucks approach. Coffee drinkers feel like they have an infinite number of choices – soy or skinny, tall or grande, extra shot, extra hot, with milk – to create their perfect drink. In fact, they're simply combining options from a limited menu. This limit is crucial. We always offer a diverse menu of learning bites that are directly relevant to organisational outcomes and learner population. Organisations can then create their own programme by picking the ingredients that are right for them, given their prior experiences and current challenges. For Starbucks loyalists, it's the ability to create their own individual Starbucks drink (within the parameters of a trusted menu) that drives employee engagement and repeat business.

## Lean makes transfer the hero, not the session itself.



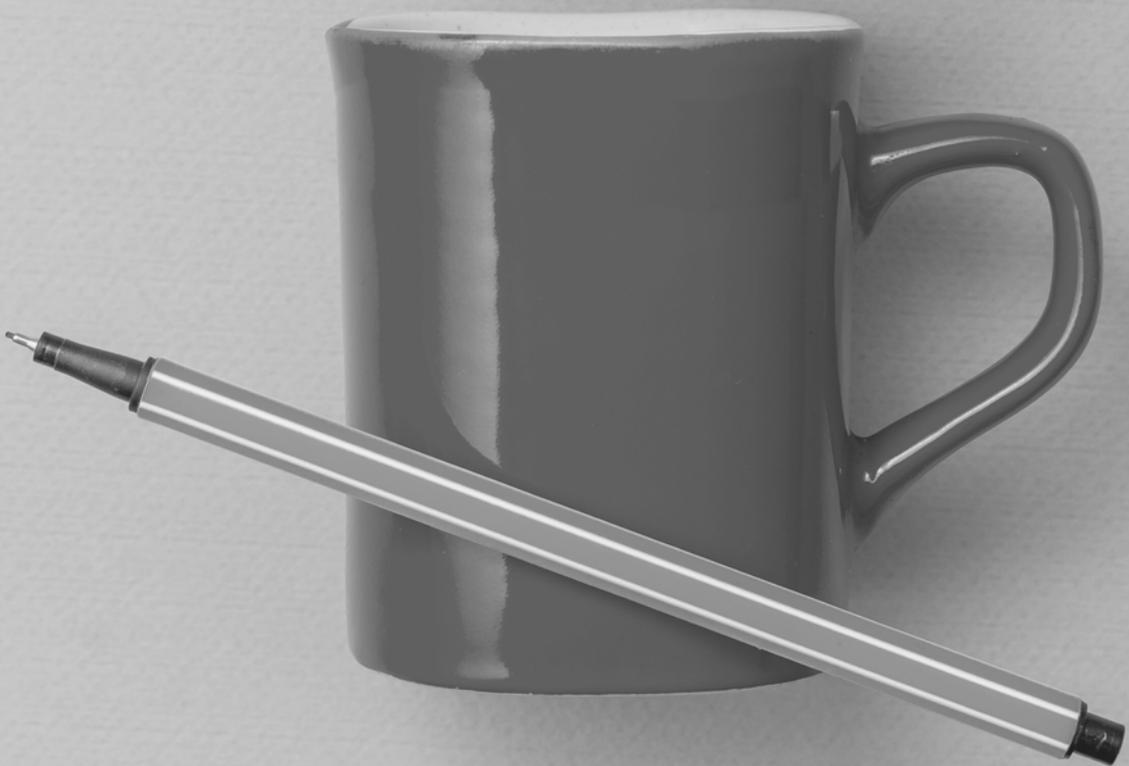
## TRIGGER ACTIVATION

We know that individuals who are psychologically engaged in training are more likely to apply what they learn. Individuals will exert more energy into something if they believe that they'll take away something valuable from it. One reason that many training programmes fail is that the problems don't feel real – they are generic case studies that have nothing to do with anyone's job.

Lean learning provides meaningful content in the form of key takeaways and specific behaviours. By using real-life examples and building in tailored, relevant models and techniques, we help learners recognise the opportunities to transfer their learning. When they get back to work, it's not as much of a mental stretch to apply what they've learnt. In fact, it's almost automatic. A distributed course of lean sessions also provides more opportunities to trigger activation.

First we activate participants' prior learning on a topic before consolidating it with new tools and techniques that they take back to work and practise. Sustainability is therefore built into the experience, not tagged on as an afterthought. However, we still advocate that to make learning stick, learning leaders need a fundamental shift in the way they think about transfer and where they focus their energy into making this happen: the emphasis should be on solving problems in the real world of work. Putting learning into action involves engaging with colleagues, clients, managers and direct reports. The lean approach needs to target not just learners but those around them.

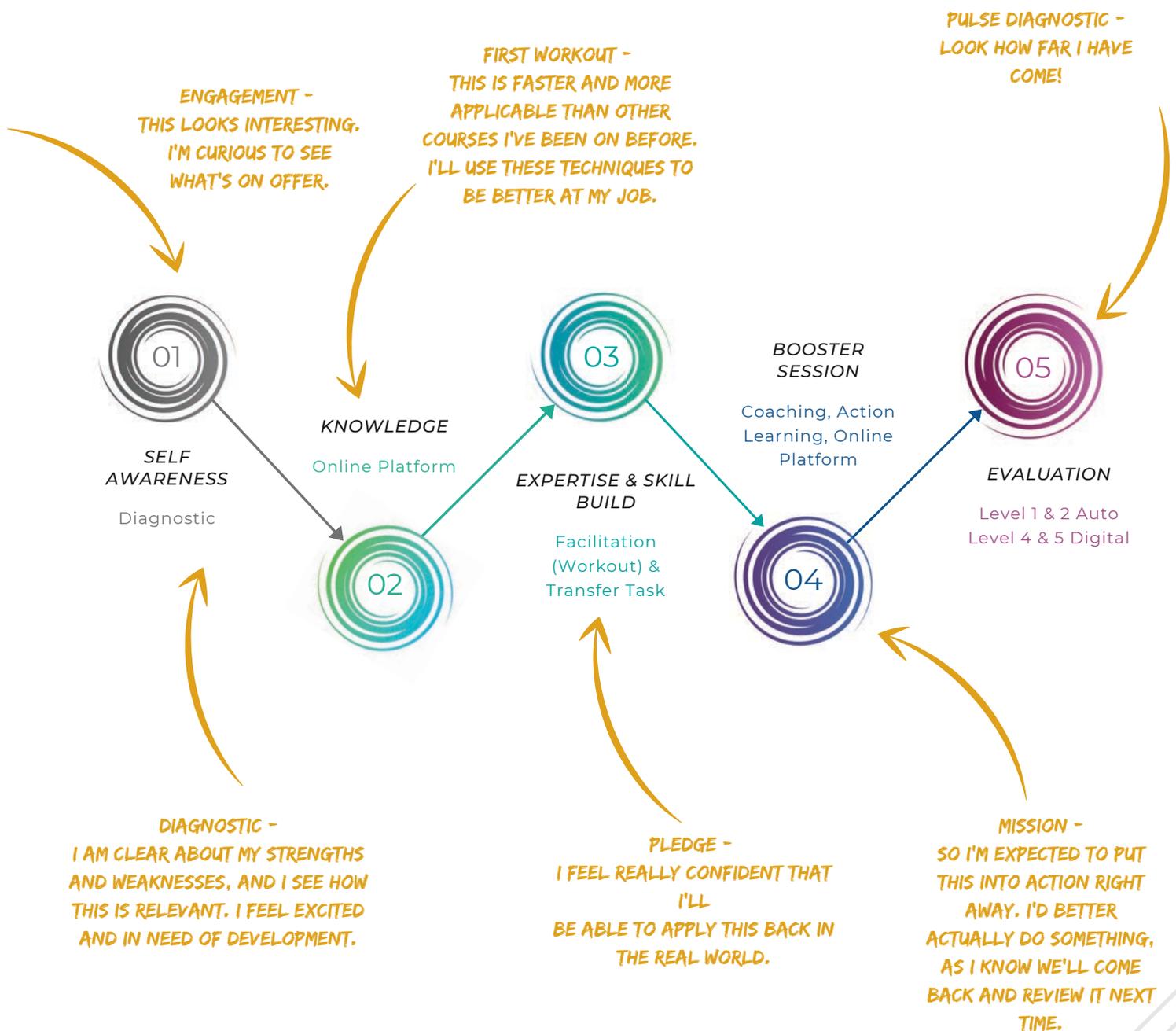
FINAL  
THOUGHTS!



# The revolutionary bite-size approach breathes new life into how organisations develop their people.

Chief Executives are constantly looking for a new way to build a sustained competitive advantage. Many suspect it could be through their people but, disappointed by the impact of the traditional solutions, they don't know how to unlock it. Likewise, many individuals have a strong desire to develop but little time to do it. Lean Learning provides the answer. By shifting focus from helping people learn to helping them solve problems in the real world, Lean appeals to both employees' self-interests and provides the tangible results business leaders need.

## ENERGISING LEAN LEARNING JOURNEY



# Multiple workouts from the menu to power up the learning



IT'S GOOD TO HEAR HOW IT WENT FOR OTHERS. I'M SURPRISED THAT THE MISSION ACTUALLY MADE WORK EASIER RATHER THAN BEING ANOTHER THING ON THE TO-DO LIST



THIS IS ANOTHER RELEVANT TOPIC. I'M SO GLAD I DIDN'T HAVE TO TAKE A WHOLE DAY OUT OF THE OFFICE TO LEARN IT, I'M BUSY ENOUGH AS IT IS.



IT'S HELPFUL TO PRACTISE WITH MY OWN REAL-LIFE SCENARIO GETTING FEEDBACK FROM MY PEERS IS RARE AND USEFUL



IT'S GREAT TO HAVE A CHANCE TO DISCUSS THE MORE DIFFICULT ISSUES I FACE WITH THE PEOPLE WHO DO THE SAME JOB. I FEEL LIKE WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER

# DIAGNOSTIC

Even better than continuous learning is continuous learning that's specific to each individual's needs and the business' competencies. All diagnostics these days are easy to set up and a delight to use, the online diagnostic brings personal insight to thousands in a matter of moments.

But what is it?

- An online questionnaire, easy to cascade at scale, easy to complete
- A unique personal report for each participant identifying areas of strength and room for improvement
- A tailored development journey, different for each participant on a learning & development portal

We recommend learning journeys as they are based on an individuals' responses to a set of specific questions. Everyone's journey can be different. It's online and hassle free. Rather than speak to everyone in turn, this journey planner is entirely managed online. The data is rich. Because it's all online, all the data can be extracted at the click of a button, giving you reams of data about individuals' performance, motivations and capability. Employees are engaged as they like to be treated as individuals, not sheep. It's worth the money investing in a portal or a provider who has a portal you can use. You'll get a better return on investment by targeting learning to individuals in this way as it will empower the learners and deliver the greatest impact.

## One size fits no one; sheep dips are for sheep

An overwhelming majority of studies have found a strong link between perceived utility and transfer. The Diagnostic ramps up the extent to which participants believe the learning will be useful, because they can see how it fits with their individual development needs. It makes participants recognise the need for change, meaning that they'll arrive more motivated to learn.



# WORKOUT

Based on what we know about the learner attention span, facilitated mind workouts balance energy highs with reflection time and are delivered in short, sharp 90-minute chunks. They can be a stand-alone 'shot in the arm' boost for a particular business need or skills gap, or combined to transform performance as part of a larger Organisational Development programme. They can also be delivered virtually for up to 25 people per cohort.

What are they?

- 90 minutes of high-energy, high-impact learning where you never sit and listen for more than five minutes
- A new way of looking at old problems
- Facilitated sessions full of practical tips and techniques to put into practice straightaway

How is this different?

- It gets straight into the How, and is safe to do so as we engaged the head in the diagnostic phase.
- No time for introductions. The trainer introduces themselves, and then gets the session moving
- Think buffet, not set menu. Sharing 10 techniques and hope each person takes two or three of the most useful for them
- No time for chit chat. We talk about specific questions and find solutions
- Time still built in for questions and to talk about how people will apply the techniques to help them solve their challenges back at work
- Tell first, and discuss later. Don't ask the audience to try and 'guess the right answer' when we already know it
- No endless sheets and slides. The takeaway is only a page long

**Workouts use the 90/20/8 rule to optimise our natural learning rhythms, so participants' attention doesn't dwindle.**





# PLEDGE

Learning is only of value when it is put into practice. And we're more likely to apply what we've learnt when the skills help us solve problems in our world. A Pledge does just that. It asks learners to anticipate how and when they will use their learning and make a commitment that's real to them. This greatly increases the chance that the learning will be put into action.

How this is put into practice:

- Individual time at the end of every workout is spent specifically discussing how to use the newly acquired tools and techniques before the next intervention
- A learner public commitment to put into action back in the workplace
- An opportunity to anticipate and prevent any barriers that may get in the way

How is this different?

- Committing to something aloud makes the learners far more likely to achieve it
- All promises are loud and clear
- No additional sessions; Pledges must be run immediately after a workout either in person or on the learning portal
- Application is tricky, so the focus is on anticipating future challenges and planning how to overcome them for improved resilience
- Look to the future. Using visualisation to imagine yourself using new tools before you've even left the room
- Strength in numbers; groups of peers commit to similar actions - creating momentum in behaviour change across the organisation

**A public commitment to put good intentions into glorious practice – so there's always someone there to remind you.**

What's the science behind it?

The articulation of intentions has significant and positive influence on people reaching their goals. And when people commit to something in front of their peers, they're much more driven to achieve it. What's more, transfer is increased by situational cues that remind you of what you pledged to do differently.





# MISSION

Creative, competitive, practical and fun, the Mission is a challenging transfer task that requires individuals to put their new skills into practice straight away in order to deliver an answer or outcome.

How this is put into practice:

- A Mission to meet a specific organisation, department or team goal makes its meaningful
- Its a snappy 15-minute briefing following a workout session on the platform to develop a framework for applying new skills right away

**The Mission gives you a way to succeed by trying out what you've just learnt... should you choose to accept it.**

How is this different?

- It's tangible. Each Mission has at least one specific objective that requires tangible outputs using specific tools from the from the earlier Workout
- They reinforce existing tools. Missions don't contain extra content, just a clear cut framework within which to apply the newly discovered tools from the Workout
- Completing the Mission requires observation from a manager or peer, and clear structure for their feedback is required
- They're not extra work. Missions are designed to fit in with individuals' day jobs so it doesn't add to existing workloads
- It's good to offer choice. Participants pick from multiple tasks related to their role so they feel empowered
- New and shiny behaviours and skills are contagious – everyone will be asking for their own Mission and a bit of competition never hurts

Missions anchor the learning in participants' everyday work context, thus reducing the amount of mental energy it takes for them to apply their learning. A successful Mission will increase participants' motivation, cement their perception that training is useful, and encourage behavioural modelling throughout their peer group.





# BOOSTER

It may have made great sense in the Workout but putting insights into action back at work tends to be far from straightforward. The Booster gives people the chance to review what happened when they gave it a go, and learn from each other's experience. As learners we tend to dismiss what went well too easily and so risk failing to repeat our successes. We can just as hastily exaggerate the consequences of our first attempt not going entirely to plan. The Booster guides learners to learn from their own experiences and those of their colleagues so they can do (even) better next time.

Vitaly, because they know there'll be a public review coming, they are far more likely to give it a go. Who wants to be the only one in class whose dog ate their homework?

What we advise:

- A Facilitated session delivered either face to face or virtually, 3-6 weeks after the Mission
- Context-specific discussions around individuals' real challenges and successes
- Create a safe environment to share ideas and provide peer support

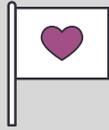
How is this different?

- It's likely that peers have similar challenges, so the Booster allows colleagues to share solutions so they are self sufficient
- Knowing you've got to present what you've achieved increases the pressure to try
- A chance for the facilitator to recap the key points from the session (repetition)
- Allows for trial and error (experiential learning).
- It catches the 65% who fail to apply



**The theory is neat, but the world is messy. The Booster explores what happens when we bring them together so we can make a lasting difference in our lives, not just in our head.**

# THE ROUND UP



## Traditional Training methods no longer work

The traditional approach to training, where we focus our time and energy on the event and helping people learn, isn't working. It's expensive, time consuming and, most of all, has a lesser impact



## It's now about Engagement, Participation & Activation through any medium

The distributed, bite-size cycle is cleverly designed to make the most of the learning experience, achieving 75% greater benefit without blowing the learning & development budget.



## Lean Learning makes good business sense

It produces greater transfer, is quicker and delivers almost twice the ROI of a traditional approach.



## Lean makes the transfer the hero not the training session

A distributed course of lean sessions provides more opportunities to trigger activation. By using real-life examples and building in tailored, relevant models and techniques, learners recognise the opportunities to transfer their learning



## This learning revolution breaths life into the way organisations develop their people today

By shifting focus from helping people learn to helping them solve problems in the real world, Lean both appeals to employees' self-interests and provides the tangible results business leaders need.

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