

DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS

FOR YOUR EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAM

How Microlearning Leads to ROI

Microlearning delivers specific learning outcomes in short bursts (typically 5-7 minutes) of information. It uses multimedia formats such as video, animation, audio, webinars, etc. to deliver content to learners.

Microlearning has a long history, but it really took off when it met the smartphone, as some learning platforms mirror popular social media sites such as Facebook and TikTok. Content is personalized and delivered to the user based on an algorithm that takes the user's interests into consideration. Because of this meeting, microlearning content is easy to access and complete, and helps employees fit learning into the flow of work.

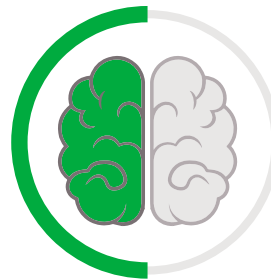
Why Video Works for Teaching Soft Skills

Video is ideally situated for learning because humans love to observe others delivering information or modeling behaviors - there's a reason 1 billion hours of video is watched on YouTube every single day. And on top of that, "how to" videos are growing year over year.

We also don't have to be active in order to learn, so video is an ideal method for passive learning. We are primarily visual creatures. Visual clues and links to knowledge are the most powerful ways to remember information and learn new skills.

Observation

We observe others either delivering information or modeling behaviors for us.



50%
OF THE BRAIN IS USED
FOR VISUAL PROCESSING.

Passive

We do not have to be active in order to learn, so video is an ideal method for passive learning.

70%
OF THE SENSORY
RECEPTORS ARE
IN THE EYES



Visual

We are primarily visual creatures. Visual clues and links to knowledge are the most powerful ways to remember things and learn new skills.

“Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action.”

Strategies for Soft Skills Development

Soft skills development is finally gaining traction as a priority for all employees, beyond just executive development programs in some organizations. However, soft skills development still remains a low priority for many (and maybe even most) organizations. It's hard to understand exactly why, when the data suggests just how important soft skills are to the success of organizations and professionals alike.

Stanford University research from "The Hard Truth About Soft Skills" showed that *75% of long-term job success depends upon soft skills mastery, and only 25% is dependent on technical skills.*

Susan Collins, the Director of Talent Acquisition and Employer Branding at Talbots, shared at the 2020 SHRM Talent Conference that *97% of employers said that soft skills were either as important or more important than hard skills.*

It's less a question of whether soft skills are important and more a matter of how to effectively increase the proficiency in soft skills in our employees, managers, and leaders.

The key to effectively developing soft skills is to focus on the specific behaviors or competencies your organization needs to change or influence to reach its goals or objectives.

Now the analysis shifts to how to best teach these skills to employees. Relying on traditional options of PowerPoint presentations and classroom training can work, but none of them are as effective at teaching soft skills as microlearning.

Developing a learning curriculum that includes short videos, time to think, and opportunities for employees to try what they're learning is going to have lasting effects. The key is to provide a heavy dose of video-based content, in short bursts, so employees can observe the skills being taught.

Video also works because of the way we process information. The term "cognitive overload" refers to situations where our short-term memory gets overloaded with information or data. When that happens, our brains literally "dump" information out of short-term memory as more information comes at us.

Our short-term memory has the capacity of storing content for 5-7 minutes at any given time, and any longer, we start losing information if we keep trying to cram more in. But, if we stop to let our minds process our observations, we can commit that short-term memory to long-term memory or more precisely into learning.

This plays perfectly into microlearning.

However, some forgetting is essential to learning. We need to force ourselves to remember something. The forced recall of learning actually strengthens the memory, but the forced recall works best after some forgetting occurs. Visual anchors to memory are important, so after watching a video, we take a quiz two days later, the act of trying to recall the content reinforces the initial learning. After two weeks, a refresher video can have a more powerful impact.

How Microlearning Leads to ROI

More traditional, in-person only training methods don't always produce the best results. With them comes the costs of instructors, travel expenses, and venue reservations. These kinds of programs are also expensive to maintain and update. However, technology has changed the way we all do business, and the classic approach isn't able to address some of today's training challenges. Let's look at how microlearning can help your organization.

Monetary Savings

Eliminates travel and venue costs. Delivering training online cuts down the need and cost associated with travel or a large space to hold employees. Plus, it makes it easier for all employees to participate in training no matter where they are. Repurposing content. Microlearning can reduce costs by allowing for administrators to recycle and repurpose content. Your videos can now be turned into blog posts, fact sheets, or longer research pieces. Repurposing content will help save money and time on content development as well as help those with differing learning styles interact with the content.

Less expensive updates. Learning platforms make it simple to change and edit content as often as needed. This is a great resource for large companies that have very diverse audiences and learners, whether they speak different languages or have different local or national laws.

Employee Benefits

Engages and empowers employees. By personalizing learning through [HYPERLINK "https://www.bizlibrary.com/products/learning-technology-comparison/"](https://www.bizlibrary.com/products/learning-technology-comparison/) learning platforms, employees can choose what they want to learn when they want to learn it – better known as personalized learning paths. Being able to have a say in their own learning journey provides a sense of empowerment and control.

Speeds up employee development. Traditional employee development consisted of annual performance reviews, large classroom refreshers, or assigning modules for review usually all in the same physical location. By using microlearning videos, employees can watch videos wherever they are, speeding up the process since it fits into the flow of work.

Increases completion rates. Learning is quickly and easily accessed by employees on their time, boosting completion rates because no one feels stressed about missing work for a large training event. Keeping it personal also motivates employees to complete training and develop their skills.

Selling microlearning and a training program to leadership can be a daunting task, but showing them the value with a tie-in to ROI can certainly help. For more information on the science of learning and how microlearning makes a difference, check out our ebook that pares down data and shares a few best practices about employee learning and development.

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Check out our ebook on learning science to decipher what learning strategies are right for your organization!



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