

How to Make Training Stick

A study run in 2006 by Saks & Belcourt found that only 62% of people on a training programme tried to reapply their learning afterwards, dropping to 44% six months after the training.

It is a common problem facing many organisations with a need to upskill their teams. They know that the daily priorities of running their business, leading projects and conducting research will always be more urgent than growing the capability of an organisation, even though they recognise the need for the latter and its importance.

Training usually means a big time and cost investment, which doesn't feel like a great return when there's little change in people's behaviour. To demonstrate how we help clients overcome this challenge, we've pulled together four ways to make training stick so people can reapply what they've learnt from the get-go.

Panasonic brought in Untapped Innovation 18 months ago to discuss how to train large numbers of their organisation on "Insight-driven value", from the basics of why it's important and simple techniques to more advanced methodologies. We collaborated with Mindtap to provide expertise in applying principles of neuroscience to training organisations and OptimaRetail with their know-how on actioning shopper and retail data to grow markets. What resulted was an 11 module online programme, available in English and Japanese, packed full of relevant case studies and hands-on exercises. Let's look at how we designed the training to stick.

1 Ensure recipients are ready to learn

Research by learning effectiveness expert Professional Robert Brinkerhoff has shown that 40% of learning fails because it doesn't create the right context. Learners don't understand how it could help them and aren't excited or intrigued.

Care was taken at the outset of the Panasonic training to ensure that internal Management were visibly laying out their vision via video. They set expectations and motivated the organisation, so all participants were clear on goals, understood why the training had been developed and were enthused to engage.



Each module was clearly advertised with an overview of the content so users could determine the relevance for them, select what they needed, and take the online courses at a time that suited them.

2 Plan the timescale so learning can be reapplied

A further 40% of learning failure is apparent because recipients can't transfer their learning into practice at the right time. Learning & Development expert Sophie James talks about structuring learning to make it meaningful and accessible with plenty of time in the workflow to prepare, attend the training and, importantly, apply the learning in everyday work.

For Panasonic, each new module was released several weeks apart, with content building upon skills learnt in the previous module. We set up a discussion forum after each module, moderated by experts to help learners engage at the right time after completing the training.

3 Bite-size topics; with focused, yet reinforced messaging

Cepeda et al published findings in 2008 to show that in order to retain learning content, people

generally need to study information on multiple occasions. And we know that an adult's working memory, on average, can hold between 5-7 items at any one time, half of that when working in a foreign language or under stress.

We designed each of the 11 modules for Panasonic around one focused topic, with no more than three key learning points included in each module to aid the retention of information. As the modules progressed, earlier concepts were revisited and interspersed with quizzes to help users gauge their progress. The discussion forum after each module provided further opportunity and encouragement for participants to revisit what they had learnt.

4 Offer engaging content

Psychologists have shown that the human brain learns best when having fun. Encouraging the release of small bursts of adrenalin can increase memory function, e.g. by asking participants to take centre stage and share in a forum or take a quiz. However, with adrenalin comes cortisol, the stress hormone, which can reduce cognitive function, so there needs to be a balance. Training should be kept calm and stress-free. Images and models engage an audience; for many, recognition and recall memory are stronger for visuals than words. Another strategy to engage learners is to show, not tell. Creating opportunities for participants to experience the learning first, for example, in a real-life case study, taps into Bandura's Social Learning Theory and increases the chance of successful behaviour change.

Getting More Children Reading with BookTrust

We were excited to be helping BookTrust explore new beneficiary ideas to get more children reading at a workshop we hosted at The Foundry in Vauxhall, London. Claire Goodall, Director of Design, Development and Strategic Planning at Book Trust said, "Untapped's breadth of experience and expertise meant they were quickly able to grasp our ambitious challenge. They partnered with us to deepen our understanding of the daily reading realities for the children and families we serve, maximised our creative capacity to turn this insight into exciting new opportunities and have worked with our internal design expertise to frame these ideas within wider innovation story territories, ensuring we can deliver long-term impact to get children reading whilst also being ready to make leaps forward at pace!"





A MODEL TO CREATE
GOOD IDEAS



Desirable
(Human Insight)



Believable
(Technical Understanding)



Distinctive
(Future Foresight)

INNOVATION GYM®

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5 Innovation Gym Top Tips for instant impact for your team



Identify where your project is positioned on the innovation cycle – has the project become stuck or did you skip bits? Would it benefit the project to back up and take stock with 'deeper insights' or 'user journey' mapping?



Think through upcoming, critical milestones – is concept development around the corner? Maybe it's time to book a 'concept thinking' gym session for your team so you are fit and ready to conceptualise breakthrough ideas?



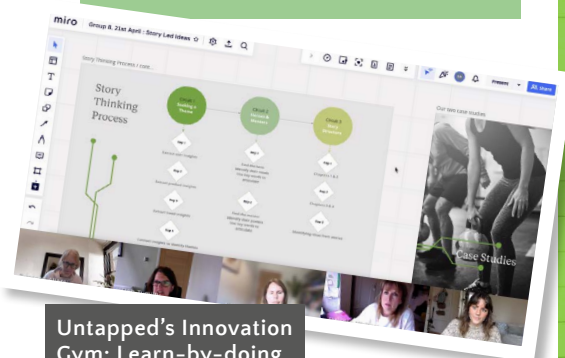
Identify skill gaps in the team, and train for them – can someone who is new to the company or new to innovation? Now could be the time to build strength and depth in the team and bring everyone onto the same page with the same thinking and approaches, especially as you begin to invest in MVP's and later prototypes.



Identify where bad habits are creeping in, especially due to real world pressures – would your project benefit from the more philosophical, yoga-like thinking of 'story led ideas' to ensure your story hero is consistently your target user throughout your project, ensuring maximum success in market when you launch.



Because even the best need help – if you are an in-house innovation trainer or agile leader consider bringing in the Innovation Gym just for aspects where you might have less experience. The best sports managers bring in fitness coaches and specialist nutritionists to elevate team performance. You can see your expert Innovation Gym coaches as specialist intervention sessions for your very best results.



Untapped's Innovation Gym: Learn-by-doing sessions, led by expert trainers using relatable case studies

Why Train With Untapped's Innovation Gym?

An agile menu of rapid skill boosters proven to have instant impact in the real world of innovation

Want to learn how to create
breakthrough prototypes?



"The MVP's developed with Untapped led to three prototypes and we have blown it out of the park. Each prototype met every action standard, beating internal and external benchmarks on critical metrics. We are beyond delighted with the results, and we wouldn't be where we are without your work."

R&D Director, Kimberley Clark

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"I better understand the target customer and user journey and can plan marketing activities more effectively"

Product Marketing, Panasonic

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"OUR MIND IS LIKE A MUSCLE – IF WE WANT TO WRITE WINNING CONCEPTS AND BE GREAT INNOVATORS, WE NEED TO KEEP TRAINING THAT PART OF OUR BRAIN AND INNOVATION GYM WILL HELP YOU WITH THAT."

Kawai Cheng-Jenkin,
Brand Strategy Consultant and
Innovation Gym expert trainer



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STEM Mentor Gargi Vijayaraghavan: "My Life as a Conservationist"

Gargi: I work as an information officer at the Environmental Information System at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS-ENVIS), Asia's oldest natural history organisation. As my title suggests, my work is to mainly provide information related to birds as we are a resource partner on Avian Ecology. BNHS-ENVIS is associated with the Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, India. My work involves education and outreach as well.

Kerry: So, I know you from your placement at WWT Slimbridge, where you were a Biologist and Amphibian Technician. But I know your love of natural science started long before, and your parents have worked in wildlife rehabilitation. How do you most identify as a scientist?

Gargi: I think my passion and curiosity to learn about the natural world. There is still this image of a 'scientist' as somebody always writing proposals, someone getting grants, but that puts pressure on budding naturalists – who ARE scientists with curiosity – who have this very rigid definition. For me, a scientist is anyone interested in science, who wants to study, who is curious and experiments and that's what I'm doing currently! Learning about fungi, their identification, their interactions etc. They're such a critical foundation to all other biodiversity but nobody really

cares about them. What I'm doing, I FEEL like a scientist when I go to the forest to do this work, taking photographs and collecting data. I'd love to expand my skills with a PhD, and I want to focus on science communication. I don't always know what my goals are, and it is OKAY to not know. See, this is what a scientist does – we think! We don't always know what we're doing, we're just curious, we want to learn, and we want to share our results. Like I mentioned above, with my current work, I do have plans to publish two articles and a scientific paper on fungi, and I want these to be accessible to everybody reading, both scientists and laypeople. I can illustrate so I will be adding some sketches and field notes so that it doesn't get boring with plain texts and scientific jargons. I want to make people aware that during our monsoon season the city is just blooming with an amazing diversity of fungi and their associated organisms!

Kerry: What advice would you give to young women in STEM?

Gargi: I have actually written a letter to my younger self about my career in conservation, and the difficulties I've faced and I have published it for anyone

“Remember, you are here for your passion. Don't think your work is small. Tigers and elephants are considered keystone species, but insects are just as important in ecosystems.”

Gargi Vijayaraghavan
(Conservationist)

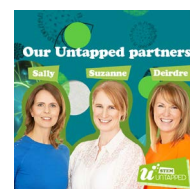


who wants to read and feel a bit better about what they are doing. I'd like to say to young women in STEM; this field is challenging, but don't give up. If you choose to become a conservationist there will be days where you are filled with self-doubt and it can be tempting to compare yourself with peers that you feel are more successful than you. Remember, you are here for your passion. Don't think your work is small. Tigers and elephants are considered keystone species, but insects are just as important in ecosystems. Self-care and motivation are really key, I think. Conserve yourself AND wildlife. You are going to do great! Don't worry about who's getting more grants or more research published – it doesn't measure your potential. Be inspired by your peers, not needlessly competitive with them.

My hope is that budding naturalists feel safe when they find a community of women in STEM. In India it can still be a male-dominated field. I wouldn't want that to hold anyone back – we are going to change that!



Find our latest STEM Untapped podcasts on Spotify or your usual podcast app



Untapped's partners

Sally, Suzanne and Deirdre have provided a platform for to connect students to accessible role models in STEM. Listen to the episode where we interviewed our partners



Charlotte Pitt

In this episode Charlotte discusses what it's like to work with young people, the importance of therapy and different ways you can access it



Kerry Hill

Kerry, an animal trainer at a WWT Wetland Conservation Centre, shares her experience on animal welfare, training animals and learning about animal science

Our new STEM Untapped website is live...

Brought to you by Untapped Innovation, STEM Untapped CIC is a social enterprise designed to help under-represented teens access a diverse network of role models in STEM industries. Our podcast offers real insight and inspiration to teens whilst our role models share their experience, the highs and lows of their career and pass on the advice they wish they'd had as a teenager. Check out our new website at untappedinnovation.com/stem-untapped.



5% of Untapped profits are donated to STEM
Untapped, a social enterprise designed to help underrepresented girls access female STEM role models.

