



# The little book *of* learning

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How to make  
a little go a  
long way

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## Training? At a time like this?

True, belts are tightened and budgets squeezed. Yet business leaders, academics and politicians are unanimous: the more skilled, knowledgeable, resilient and committed your people, the better you will fare through these testing times.

This book is about how training can help you through the recession. It's about how to find and fund training and get the most out of it. It's for individuals looking to develop skills as well as anyone responsible for developing the skills of employees. It's designed to help you understand the theory and so make smart choices about training.

Above all it's about developing, motivating and keeping people through the downturn – on small or non-existent training budgets – and coming out stronger at the end of it.

*"Now is precisely the time to keep investing in the skills and talents of our people. It is the people we employ who will get us through."*  
**Sir Stuart Rose, Chairman of Marks & Spencer**

*"Investing in training is essential to any business but it is more important than ever in the current economic climate. Research shows that companies that don't train are 2.5 times more likely to fail than those who do."* **John Denham, Skills Secretary**



Share this book at  
[www.reedlearning.co.uk/sendtoafriend](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/sendtoafriend)

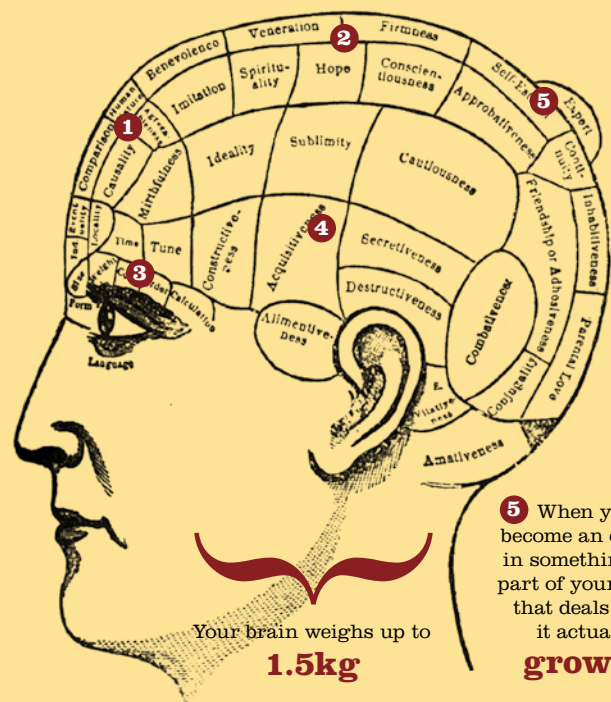
# HOW YOUR BRAIN WORKS

## 1 The frontal lobe

handles judgement, impulse control, empathy, altruism. This is the last part of the brain to mature, as late as your early 20s – which perhaps explains teenagers.

## 2 Cerebral cortex

memory storage (your hard drive). Most people's short-term memory can hold nine pieces of information simultaneously.



5 When you become an expert in something, the part of your brain that deals with it actually grows...

## 3 Sleep

allows you to produce new synapses, connecting brain cells. If synapses are not renewed they become saturated with knowledge, which can stop people learning.

## 4 Hippocampus

new memory processing. The best jokes are the hardest to remember because they don't follow usual thought processes.

## How to make the cost of learning add up

Learning isn't as tangible as, say, a new photocopier. To make a case for investment, you need to identify an end result and demonstrate how it will improve your bottom line.

Donald Kirkpatrick created the most widely used training evaluation model (see page 7). If you use it to work out the return on your investment, your training programme will be much more likely to receive top-level support.

A written business case for training should include:

- The cost, including investment of time and resources.
- The benefits, covering changes in behaviour and, ultimately profitability.
- The time line: how long will this course deliver improvements? How long will it take for these improvements to pay for the cost?

You can then make a considered, costed statement about the benefits of training – and point out the consequences of not training. This does not have to be a long and involved document.

### A couple of examples:

*"We are currently wasting five working days every month manually processing reports. This Excel course will allow us to automate reports, saving £24,000 of business time in a year."*

*"This programme for first line managers will help us reduce staff churn by 25%, saving us £15k annually in recruitment fees."*

Who could argue with that?



**For more information on how to build a business case for learning go to [www.reedlearning.co.uk/businesscase](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/businesscase)**

HOW TO

# THINK

*from different angles*

Back in the '80s, Edward De Bono devised his system of Six Hats\* to analyse the different ways your brain can think. Using these six thinking styles can help you consider all the aspects of a problem. Changing your perspective helps you to think more creatively...



**White hat:**  
strictly facts and information



**Yellow hat:**  
spotting benefits, seeking harmony



**Red hat:**  
feelings, emotions, gut reactions



**Green hat:**  
creative alternatives, letting ideas take you where they lead



**Black hat:**  
making critical judgements and finding flaws



**Blue hat:**  
thinking about thinking, controlling the process

## **THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER WAYS TO CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE**

Here are two popular methods:

- Think of three famous people, each different from the other. Pose your problem to your celebs in turn. Quickly write down 10 responses from them
- Imagine the worst thing you could possibly do in a situation, then work out its opposite

\*Edward de Bono, "Six Thinking Hats", Penguin, ISBN: 0140296662

**Book a place on our one-day Creative Thinking course at [www.reedlearning.co.uk/ct](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/ct)**

## **Choosing the right training for right now**

In these austere times it's more important than ever to focus on training and skills that will make a difference. There are a number of key questions to ask:

- What are our key organisational goals?
- How does this training achieve them?
- If it doesn't, why do we need it?
- Will it help us in an upturn as well as a downturn?
- Are there other ways that my people could develop these skills for themselves? (see page 14)

Answering these questions will help you clarify your thinking and encourage you to do the following:

**Spend wisely** – make sure your training budget is being allocated wisely by connecting it to your organisation's critical needs.

**Seek efficiency** – if four or more people have a similar training need, it's normally cheaper to run an in-house course.

**Think twice** – could coaching or peer-to-peer learning give you better results?

**Get buy-in** – if people don't know why they are being trained, they are less likely to learn.

**Focus on results** – getting the right results is all-important – begin with the end in mind and decide how you will evaluate the training.



**WE CAN HELP YOU CONDUCT A FULL TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS. VISIT [WWW.REEDLEARNING.CO.UK/TNA](http://WWW.REEDLEARNING.CO.UK/TNA) OR RING SUSANNAH ON 020 7520 6951**

## HOW TO

# DEVELOP AN ENCYCLOPAEDIC MEMORY



**GET IN THE MOOD:** you're more likely to remember things that you associate with an emotional state. In a good mood you will tend to remember positive events.



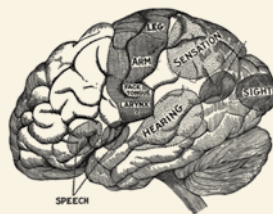
**EAT SMARTER:** as brain neurons age, it becomes harder to retain short-term memories. A diet rich in antioxidants (avocados, spinach, blueberries, onions, cherries, etc.) can help.



**JOG YOUR PEGS:** memory pegs associate information with images and numbers.



**CREATE LANDMARKS:** for long lists, think of a familiar journey, then associate the things you need to remember with the landmarks on the way.



**TERRA COGNITA:** creating a visual map of what you're trying to remember can help you recall how each part of the subject fits together.

## How to sound like a learning expert

Take this test to see how you measure up on learning theory.

- Q1.** Which of the following is NOT a commonly used psychometric tool?
- 16PF
  - MBTI
  - DISC
  - Insights
  - RGBD
- 
- Q2.** Which statement best describes Level 3 in Kirkpatrick's evaluation model?
- "Liked it"
  - "Used it"
  - "Learned it"
  - "Hated it"
  - "Improved it"
- 
- Q3.** Which of the following are NOT Honey & Mumford's "learner types"?
- Activists
  - Pacifists
  - Reflectors
  - Magnifiers
  - Pragmatists
- 
- Q4.** What is "Edupunk"?
- A four piece New Jersey, Ramones tribute band
  - An approach to teaching and learning practice that results from a do it yourself (DIY) attitude
  - A pejorative term used by L&D professionals to describe managers who subvert learning
  - A high school drop out
  - An L&D movement that rejects all classical learning theory
- 
- Q5.** How many different types of intelligence did Howard Gardener originally identify in his theory of multiple intelligence?
- 3
  - 5
  - 7
  - 8
  - 12



FOR THE ANSWERS AND A SELECTED READING LIST GO TO [WWW.REEDLEARNING/LEARNINGEXPERT](http://WWW.REEDLEARNING/LEARNINGEXPERT)

HOW TO GET THE GOVERNMENT  
TO PAY FOR YOUR TRAINING

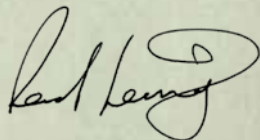
**IMPORTANT**

The government has earmarked money for training. But the network of funding routes and channels can seem, well, tricky. Here's a summary:

Train to Gain

A scheme provided by the Learning & Skills Council, funding training in all sectors, from a one-off course for a senior manager to a company-wide skills programme. You can access Train to Gain through an impartial Skills Adviser who will use the National Learning Directory to suggest three reputable training providers – either private training companies or local colleges. Alternatively, you can source the training you want and go to a Skills Adviser for advice on getting full or part funding for it.

Louise Parry is your contact at Reed Learning for all enquiries about funding your training. You can talk to her now on 020 7520 6609.



INFORMATION CORRECT AT TIME  
OF GOING TO PRESS, MAY 2009

## Are you eligible for government funding?

Not everyone will be eligible and the funding varies according to where you are. Key target groups are:

**Small businesses (five to 250)** – especially for leadership and management training, where grants of up to £1,000 are available.

**Small businesses (under 50 employees)** – get help with wage costs when people are out of the office attending training.

**Anyone without five good GCSEs** – equivalent to a Level 2 qualification on the national framework – the minimum standard the government seeks for all UK employees.

**People looking for a Level 3 qualification (equivalent to A-Level)** – this can be full or part-funded, depending on past achievement.



Speak to a Skills Adviser directly on:  
**0800 015 55 45**. Find out more about the options available at [www.employersguide.org.uk](http://www.employersguide.org.uk)



Visit [www.reedlearning.co.uk/funding](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/funding) to find out how we can help you fund your learning

Learning  
"TOP TIPS"

## SIX WAYS TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE

# 1

**The eyes have it** – eye contact  
(at the right time and in the right quantity)  
can be a powerful persuader

# 2

**Build rapport** – people enjoy doing  
business with people they like

# 3

**Earn respect** – cutting out "um",  
"like" and "I mean" shows you know  
what you are doing

# 4

**Reciprocate** – help people  
and they will help you

# 5

**Improve timing** – think carefully  
about the right moment and the right  
place for meetings or discussions

# 6

**Let go** – becoming emotionally  
attached to ideas can prevent you  
from considering alternatives

## Achieving big things with a small training budget

**Double up** – find a friend or colleague who wants to do the same course as you – you might be able to negotiate a discount.

**Train each other** – use the talent in your company and encourage peer-to-peer coaching.

**Blend it** – 'blended' learning is all the rage this year. Combining instructor-led training, peer interaction and e-learning offers excellent value and can be very effective.

**Look for deals** – many companies reduce the cost of courses for last minute bookings. Signing up for online updates can keep you in touch.

**Defend your budget** – setting up a 'holding account' with a learning provider can help you save budget until you need it and get you preferential rates and/or free extras.

**Minimise time out** – to cut the opportunity cost of time out, think about flexible training options like in-house drop-in surgeries, morning or evening sessions and bite-sized courses running through the day.

**Take advantage of your trainer** – with in-house programmes, think about prioritising the content and running a half day course, then use your trainer for some consultancy or executive coaching in the other half.



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# *How to be Charismatic*



**Charisma is about channelling positive energy to other people.** Research shows that we all prefer to be around people who are tranquil, relaxed and in control. Easier said than done? Here are some tips.

**Improve your posture.** Nothing conveys confidence like it. Stand or sit up straight and look the other person in the eye. Uncross your legs and arms, keep your hands away from your face. Don't fidget.

**Be emotional.** Research shows that charismatic people feel and display emotions strongly. Don't be afraid to show your feelings.

**Think, pause, speak.** Try to make every word count. Think about how you're going to phrase something before you start speaking. Talking less will make you sound more interesting.

Learn how to make an impact on our course *Delivering Beyond Yourself* [www.reedlearning.co.uk/dby](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/dby)

*Charisma*

Make people feel special. Remember people's names, smile, be yourself, relax.

## How to negotiate skilfully with suppliers

Now is a great time to practise negotiating. Suppliers and retailers are more eager than ever for your business: special offers and discounts are there for the taking.

**The 'm' word** – don't be afraid to talk about money, even if the other party doesn't appear open to making a deal.

**Keep schtum** – don't be too quick to name a price and never accept a first offer. Don't concede or compromise too early.

**Paraphrase** – summarise the other person's desires to gain influence: "So what you're looking for is..."

**Aim high** – ask for more than you expect or hope to get – you might just get it.

**Build consensus** – remember you are both working towards the same goal. It's not about 'winning'. Both parties need to feel satisfied with the end result.

**Be strong** – don't let yourself be boxed in or succumb to pressure tactics, official-sounding 'rules' or 'the way it's always done.'

**Walk away** – if you feel rushed, get the best offer and take it away to think/talk over.



**Learn to be firm but fair on our course *Assertiveness at Work*** [www.reedlearning.co.uk/awk](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/awk)

# HOW TO LEARN *EVERYTHING* IN A FEW MOUSE CLICKS



**LinkedIn.com:** make your own business community, ask and answer questions

**iGoogle.com:** your online world in one place. Try Reader, Groups and Docs

**twitter.com:** a bit like stalking, but legal

**Wikipedia.org:** more accurate than the Encyclopaedia Britannica

**Delicious.com:** bookmark your favourites and see what everyone else likes

**YouTube.com:** learning opportunities, from Excel macros to knitting

**hassleme.co.uk:** automated nagging, straight to your inbox

**ning.com:** create your own free social network

**knol.google.com:** show what you know

**wikiHow.com:** the world's biggest 'how to' manual

**technorati.com/business:** what business bloggers are talking about

**wetpaint.com:** your own company wiki to share ideas and news

**expert-exchange.com:** a pay service offering good quality IT support

**jingproject.com:** video your onscreen actions and share with others

**iTunesU.com:** free audio and video tutorials from experts around the world

**reedlearning.co.uk/onthego:** business training MP3s on over 20 topics

**businessballs.com:** a wealth of hints and tips

## Learning to learn online

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Sometimes a formal training programme is not the answer. Online communities and forums are changing the way we learn, offering a wealth of valuable information immediately and for free. Why pay an expert if you can type a question into Google, or go to LinkedIn and find someone who works in the field?

The problem is no longer finding or memorising information – the web has largely automated that. The challenge now is to learn in the new environment: how do you sort the wheat from the chaff, scanning, filtering, and assessing the quality of data and advice available?

The fundamental process by which human beings learn has not changed. Many people will still need encouraging, cajoling and prompting to make real changes to the way they work. But the use of Web 2.0 technologies offers access to rich, varied, instant and free learning experiences.



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Find out more, download our white paper on learning everything and join our LinkedIn group at [www.reedlearning.co.uk/learneverything](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/learneverything)

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How to keep people buoyant when...

# THE ECONOMY SINKS

**Spa days and Hawaiian junkets are out for the time being**, so think about affordable perks. See what goods or services you can barter with local vendors - even just eating lunch together can boost morale.

**No news isn't good news**. Keep people updated on the progress of the business as well as their personal performance. Make sure people understand how their contribution makes a difference.

**Set realistic goals** – and invite people to contribute to objective target setting. Give people personal opportunities to learn and take on new responsibilities.

**Find the silver lining**. For many companies the downturn is an opportunity to pull away from the competition, take market share and try something innovative.

**Most people want to make a contribution to society**. Think about setting up links with local schools or with community organisations. Visit [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) for some ideas.

**Make people feel they are part of something important** by going up for an award or generating press coverage for your company.

**'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself'**. Don't worry too much. Enthusiasm is contagious. Motivate yourself and you will motivate others.

## What are you waiting for? Get out there and have a go

Words and good intentions on their own mean nothing. Provoking real positive change is the challenge. There are a few simple ways to take the training wheels off – and make sure the learning sticks.

When someone returns to work after a course, ask them: a) 'What are the top three things you learned?' b) 'What are you going to do as a result?' and c) 'By when?'

A smart manager will add d) 'What can I do to help?' This helps reinforce and direct the energy people feel after training and can bridge the gap between the training room and the workplace. Help your employees support each other. Pair up people who have trained together and get them to share what they have learned with others.

Create an online forum for the exchange of ideas and to help publicise your goals. 'Action learning sets' are groups that come together regularly to share learning. Where you feel learning isn't being applied, encourage employees to break large challenges into less daunting bite-size pieces.

Above all, make sure people aren't being put off by fear of failure or embarrassment. Apply the Dr Pepper principle: "Try it. What's the worst that could happen?"



**CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION AT [WWW.REEDLEARNING.CO.UK/ACTION](http://WWW.REEDLEARNING.CO.UK/ACTION)**

## Making it work in the real world



### PRINCE2® Practitioner Certificate

*Since the course I have begun a new job as a Project Manager and can confidently use the PRINCE2® framework I learned. I've streamlined several new and existing projects, delegated much more in the form of work packages, empowering others and freeing my time to control the project operations.*

**Depot Manager, Cancer Research UK Ltd**

### Train The Trainer – Residential

*I've learned how to engage with an audience, how to train and not present, and achieved all of my own personal objectives. Since the course I have been promoted to Training Officer at Christie's and am really growing in my new role.*

**Training Officer, Christie's**



### Speaking Professionally

*I've gained genuine confidence about speaking in public. I'm aware of my tone and volume when speaking and this skill definitely makes myself and my company look more professional. The course actually was a complete hoot, with the added benefit of actually learning some really valuable lessons on speaking publicly!*

**Training Coordinator, Identity And Passport Service**

### Effective Communication

*Thinking about the things I want to say, how I am going to say them and the art of listening in order to gauge the tone of meetings and conversations – they're the main things I've taken from the course. It's helping me to face my communication demons and move forward with a lot more confidence in my ability.*

**Building Services Manager, Donisthorpe Hall**



### Management Skills for the Senior PA

*My confidence in my role has grown immensely. The feeling that my opinion does count in a high level management environment has given me the confidence to offer it more regularly.*

**PA, Costain Ltd**

### Discovering The Secrets Of Self Confidence

*I think I have more courage to speak up, resulting in a very positive attitude at work and even in my personal life. And I am working well in the team. The course helped me to believe in myself.*

**Financial Journalist, The Financial Times**



### The Corporate Receptionist

*The course has left me feeling confident about myself – generally having some guidelines to follow makes your life and job easier. It most certainly has given me a thirst for more learning. I felt revived and confident when I walked out of the building that day – I felt I'd really improved myself.*

**Receptionist, Institute Of Physics**

### Fundamentals Of Web Design

*In the three months since the course I have been able to produce a website and CD for a global sales conference. Initially these projects were being outsourced, but we can now keep them in-house...fantastic!*

**Sales Coordinator, Elsevier Ltd**



**Find out what other companies are up to at [www.reedlearning.co.uk/casestudies](http://www.reedlearning.co.uk/casestudies)**



The logo for Reed Learning is contained within a white square border. It features the word "REED" in a large, white, serif font, with "LEARNING" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font directly below it. Underneath the text are three small, white, circular dots arranged horizontally.

REED  
LEARNING

Reed Learning is one of the foremost learning providers in the UK, with over 15 years' experience of delivering quality training to thousands of organisations. We run over 200 short courses and a range of professional qualifications reinforced by internationally recognised accreditations. And we can design and deliver bespoke programmes at the location of your choice. We also provide client-specific managed services to outsource training coordination and administration, proven to reduce training spend by up to 25% whilst improving quality and consistency.

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