

## Maintaining Retention and Recall

Up to 80 percent of all information learned is lost within 24 hours. Reviewing information is crucial to high retention and good recall. If you do this at the correct times, you reduce the total number of reviews required.

### Focus point

- Review new information regularly—once or twice is not enough to commit it to long-term memory.

### Reviewing information

To maximize learning you must review the new information before the level of recall drops too far. In the first 24 hours, the brain is playing with the new information, connecting it with existing information. This means it is relatively easy to recall during that period. Once this process is finished, the level of recall quickly drops. To prevent this from happening, you must review information regularly. This ensures that the brain continues to access the new information, assessing it and recalling it in detail.

### At a glance

- Most new information is lost within one day if you do not go over it an hour after learning it.
- Only by reviewing at regular intervals will you maintain long-term recall.
- As you become proficient at memorizing and recalling, you will feel confident enough to set new targets.

### Making a plan

A written plan ensures that you consolidate your learning by recalling information at regular intervals. This is especially important for studying, but is essential for any information that you wish to retain long-term. The best time to review information is one hour after the initial learning. You should then review it a day after the initial learning, then a week, then a month, then three months, and finally every six months afterward. Mark these dates in your planner and make them part of your personal action plan.

### Setting new goals

Maintaining high recall builds your confidence in your memory, which in turn encourages you to continue your learning path. As memory techniques become a part of your life, you can use quiet times to review information or memorize new information. This will become a habit rather than a chore. As you devote more time to memorizing and recalling, you will want take on new challenges. When you set these higher goals, you can update your personal action plan.

### The pattern of recall

The graph shows your learning pattern and the best times to review new information. The first curved line shows recall immediately after learning. It starts at 80 percent and rises because the brain is associating the new information with data it already has. However, without a review,

recall then drops quickly to about 20 percent. So, a review is necessary before recall drops below 80 percent, i.e., after one hour. The second line shows recall after the first review, a day later. Recall stays at about 40 percent unless it is reviewed again, a week later. With reviews at one, three, and six months, it stays at about 80 percent.

