

# 5 REASONS BITE-SIZED LEARNING HELPS RETENTION

Many studies show the more direct we are in our approach to learning, the greater the depth and length of retention. More specifically, the clearer we make our learning, the easier it becomes for someone to remember. So the clear path to learning is making it simple. And making it simple means breaking it down into small parts.

**38%** of learning organizations say that knowledge transfer and retention of content are their biggest challenges <sup>1</sup>

AND

FEWER THAN  
**15%** of participants successfully apply what they learn <sup>2</sup>

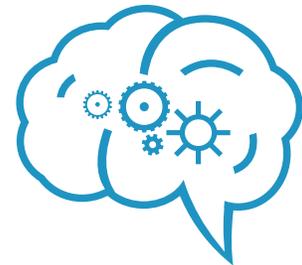
A bite-size approach to creating and delivering learning content results in **17%** greater transfer of knowledge. <sup>3</sup>



## HERE ARE FIVE REASONS WHY THIS WORKS.

### 1 *It is how our brains work*

Today, we may have more information than we ever need at our fingertips, but our brains still only learn in bite-sizes.



We may make 50,000 decisions in a day, but they are all one at a time. And even big decisions are made with a small bit of data, because it is all our brains can process at one time.

<sup>1</sup> [5 Ways to Stop Training Content Overload](#)

<sup>2</sup> Brinkerhoff, R. O., Apking, A. M. (2001). High impact learning: Strategies for leveraging business results from training.

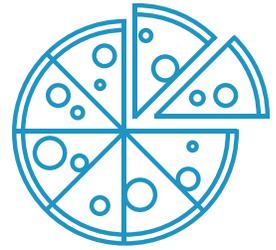
<sup>3</sup> [Bite Sized Revolution](#)



# 2

## *It is easier to digest*

You wouldn't try to eat an entire pizza all at one time would you? (OK, maybe you would but that isn't the point). The point is, you can only digest so much at once. There has been loads of research that suggest working out at the gym using intervals of varying intensity for a shorter amount of time actually improves the results sooner. And eating smaller meals more times throughout the day is healthier than three huge meals. The same goes for learning, smaller bits of content are easier to digest and retain.



# 3

## *It is easier to take the bite-size learning into practice*

Applying something a learner has consumed immediately after consuming it means they will retain that knowledge for a longer period of time. And it is easier to immediately apply knowledge if it is small and already digested. The old adage holds true: practice makes perfect!

# 4

## *It can be tailored around busy work schedules*

According to Bersin by Deloitte, the modern learner only has 1% of their typical work week to devote to learning. So asking employees to participate in an all-day training or an all-day online course is more than they can fit in their schedule. Remember, your learners are overwhelmed, distracted and impatient. They want to learn when they need it to perform better on the job.



# 5

## *It is easier to refresh knowledge*

Learning in a bite-size manner in the first place increases stickiness. But, there is a limitation in our working memory. Cognitive Load theory suggests that there are three types of cognitive load that learners will process at once. If the current working memory capacity of the learner is less than the combined load, the learning will be lost.<sup>4</sup> [Read more about cognitive, and content, overload in this ebook.](#)

No one wants to retake an hour long course to get at one small piece of information that they forgot in training. But having content available in bite-sized pieces allows for the learner to go back, and refresh their memory quickly and easily and apply it immediately to the job at hand.

This bite-size learning approach is not just taking an hour long course and breaking it down into 2-minute video shorts. This could be just as tedious as watching the whole hour-long video.

Bite-size learning is also more than just shorter courses. It is really about chunking out your learning content into easy to find and consume nuggets and thinking beyond the course right from the beginning of the design process. Learning content management is at the heart of how to successfully implement a bite-sized approach. A learning content management

solution like Xyleme helps you write once, assemble quickly and easily publish your content to many outputs, like desktop, mobile, print, etc. And, your content is accessible and findable at the moment-of-need for the learner. The modern learner wants to access content anytime, anywhere and with any device, and using Xyleme makes this possible.



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<sup>4</sup> [5 Ways to Reduce Cognitive Load in eLearning](#)

