

# What is Microlearning and Why is it Valuable?

Learning in stretches of 3-7 minutes matches people’s working memory capacity and attention spans. The human brain is not wired to maintain focus for hours on end. Most learners prefer education when content is delivered in short bursts, with repetition to aid retention. Microlearning is built to deliver content in brief hyper focused snippets.

## Key Value Points For Microlearning



**Helps learners achieve one learning objective at a time:** A learning objective is a statement which defines what the learner will be able to do or know after completing the training. This ensures that learners take one step at a time so that they clearly understand it, before moving to the next one.



**Provides specific and targeted information:** Any training program includes two types of information, need-to-know and nice-to-know. Microlearning focuses on need-to-know, saving time and making it easier to engage with.



**Addresses short attention spans:** Microlearning is structured so learners do not need to engage for more than 8-10 minutes to complete a module. Usually, it is much less than that. This makes it ideal for today’s learners in need of real-time learning and application.



**Full learning life-cycle flexibility:** The beauty of microlearning is that you can use it as a stand-alone learning delivery mechanism or blend it with your overall learning strategy. Consider, the width and breadth of microlearning applications within these areas:

train-the-trainer  
 instructor and learner models  
 (one-to-one and small group learning)  
 large group learning and remote learning nationwide  
 refresher courses  
 on-boarding new staff

new skill development  
 skill prompting and reminders  
 continuing education  
 refresher courses  
 independent learning  
 general “up-skilling”



**Fast Delivery:** Fewer things to write means shorter course delivery times. With microlearning, you can build a course with dozens of units in an hour.



**Flexibility:** Microlearning courses can cover any subject that regular eLearning courses can; just in a bite-sized way. You can create courses that give a broad overview of a subject or even create ones for complex topics.



**High Engagement:** Regular online training that uses text-heavy courses is not ideal for studying in short stints. Microlearning, on the other hand, lets your learners enjoy casual learning whenever they have some spare time.



**Boosted Retention:** According to microlearning research, when you study something repeatedly and revisit it when you are close to forgetting it, you retain it much better. Such repeated study fits nicely with microlearning units since they are small, self-contained, and easy to return to.

## Why Microlearning Works For Learners With Intellectual Or Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

Short duration, targeted information, any device access, performance support, and fluidity to fit anywhere in the learning cycle – these features of microlearning make it a great training solution for learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as neurotypical learners. Because it is accessed anytime, anyplace, it has real time value for skill development. Like having a coach in your pocket.

Microlearning also provides an easy ability to revisit skills that may need more reinforcement, like traveling safely or problem solving. Microlearning also flips the forgetting curve to the retention curve. Microlearning improves focus and supports long-term retention by up to 80% according to RPS research.

Here's why microlearning is more efficient than traditional longer-duration courses:

- When bite-sized learning content is easily and readily accessible, learners can take it at their own pace, wherever they are, and most importantly, when they are “ready.”
- Because bite-sized courses are more focused, learners don't have to clutter their memories with irrelevant information. This makes retention easier.
- Learners have to digest only small chunks of information. This makes comprehension easier without spending too much effort.
- Because microlearning content addresses only 1-2 learning objectives, courses, on average, yield 4-5 learned takeaways.
- According to the findings of a survey on Learning and Development professionals, a whopping 94% said that they prefer microlearning to traditional time-consuming eLearning courses because their learners prefer it (Boyette, 2012).

Microlearning fits the bill perfectly with learning customized to needs, it is on demand, and can be accessed anywhere. It has proved to be a successful alternative to long-form eLearning courses as it allows students to digest things quickly and retain the subject. Microlearning creates 50% more engagement with users and can be inserted anywhere within the learning process. It also provides flexible pacing and is built for lifelong support.