

PRACTICAL WAYS TO *INTRODUCE ENGAGEMENT*

Engagement is a set of conditions, not a product. Immersive experiences like our escape rooms deliberately engineer those conditions but many of the same principles can be applied using tools and structures you've likely already got at your disposal.

Shift learning *from exposure to experience* with practical, low-cost ways to improve engagement. Align your existing training with how people actually learn and behave.

01

Introduce **decision points**. Not just information.

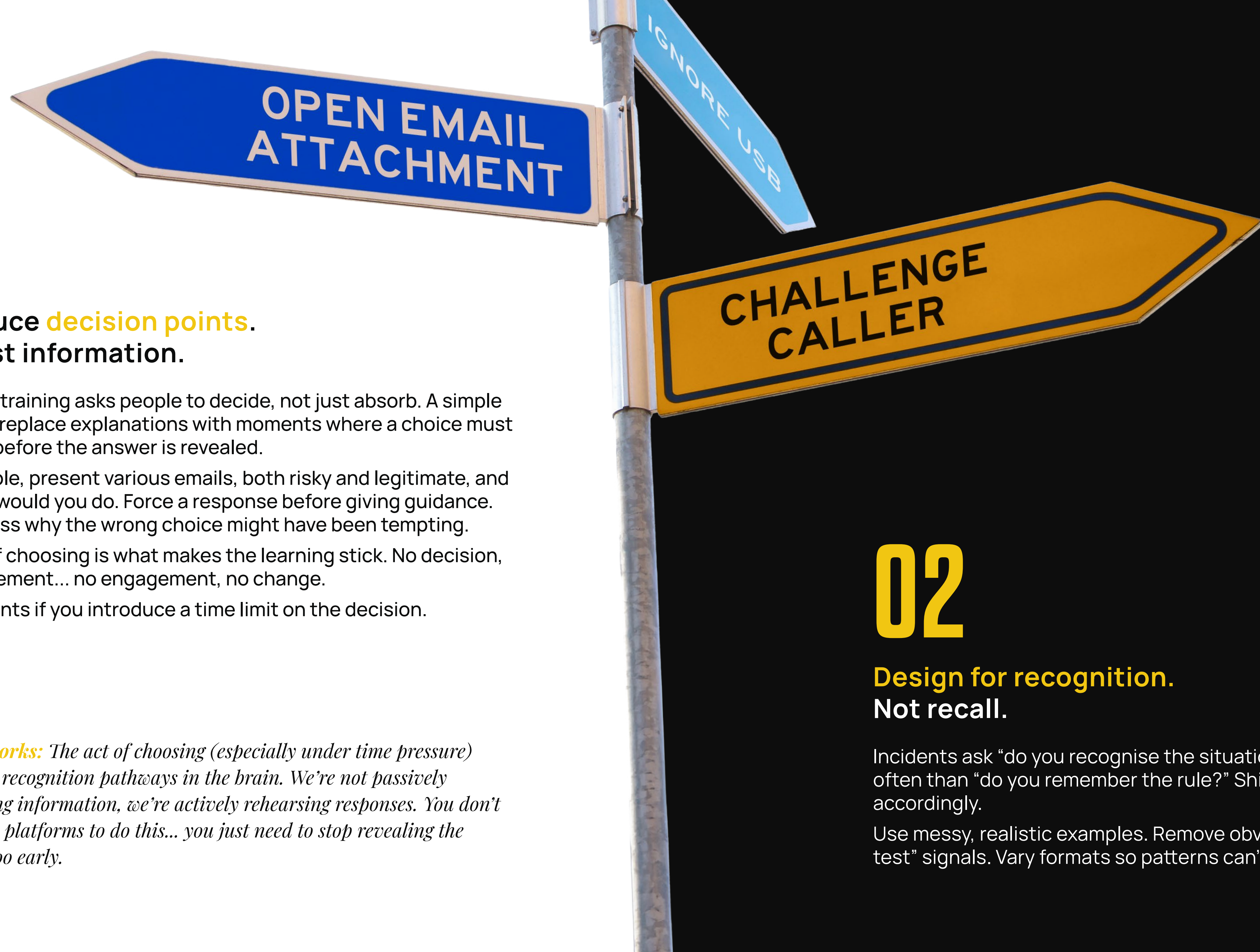
Engaging training asks people to decide, not just absorb. A simple shift is to replace explanations with moments where a choice must be made before the answer is revealed.

For example, present various emails, both risky and legitimate, and ask what would you do. Force a response before giving guidance. And discuss why the wrong choice might have been tempting.

The act of choosing is what makes the learning stick. No decision, no engagement... no engagement, no change.

Bonus points if you introduce a time limit on the decision.

***Why it works:** The act of choosing (especially under time pressure) activates recognition pathways in the brain. We're not passively consuming information, we're actively rehearsing responses. You don't need new platforms to do this... you just need to stop revealing the answer too early.*



02

Design for recognition. Not recall.

Incidents ask “do you recognise the situation?” far more often than “do you remember the rule?” Shift the design accordingly.

Use messy, realistic examples. Remove obvious “this is a test” signals. Vary formats so patterns can’t be predicted.

03

Train under **mild pressure**... On purpose.

Real incidents are rarely calm. Pressure doesn't need to be extreme to be effective. Even small constraints can change how the brain engages.

Think time limits on discussions, countdown timers on exercises, interruptions or competing tasks, or giving ambiguous or incomplete information.

The goal isn't stress, per se. It's context. Because training that never includes pressure teaches people to rely on slow, reflective thinking, exactly the thing least available during real incidents.



04

Delay the answer.

Immediate correction feels efficient, but it weakens learning.

Let people sit with uncertainty. Explore why the wrong answer felt right.

Let teams commit before revealing guidance. Discuss consequences first. The brain remembers resolved tension better than instant feedback.

05

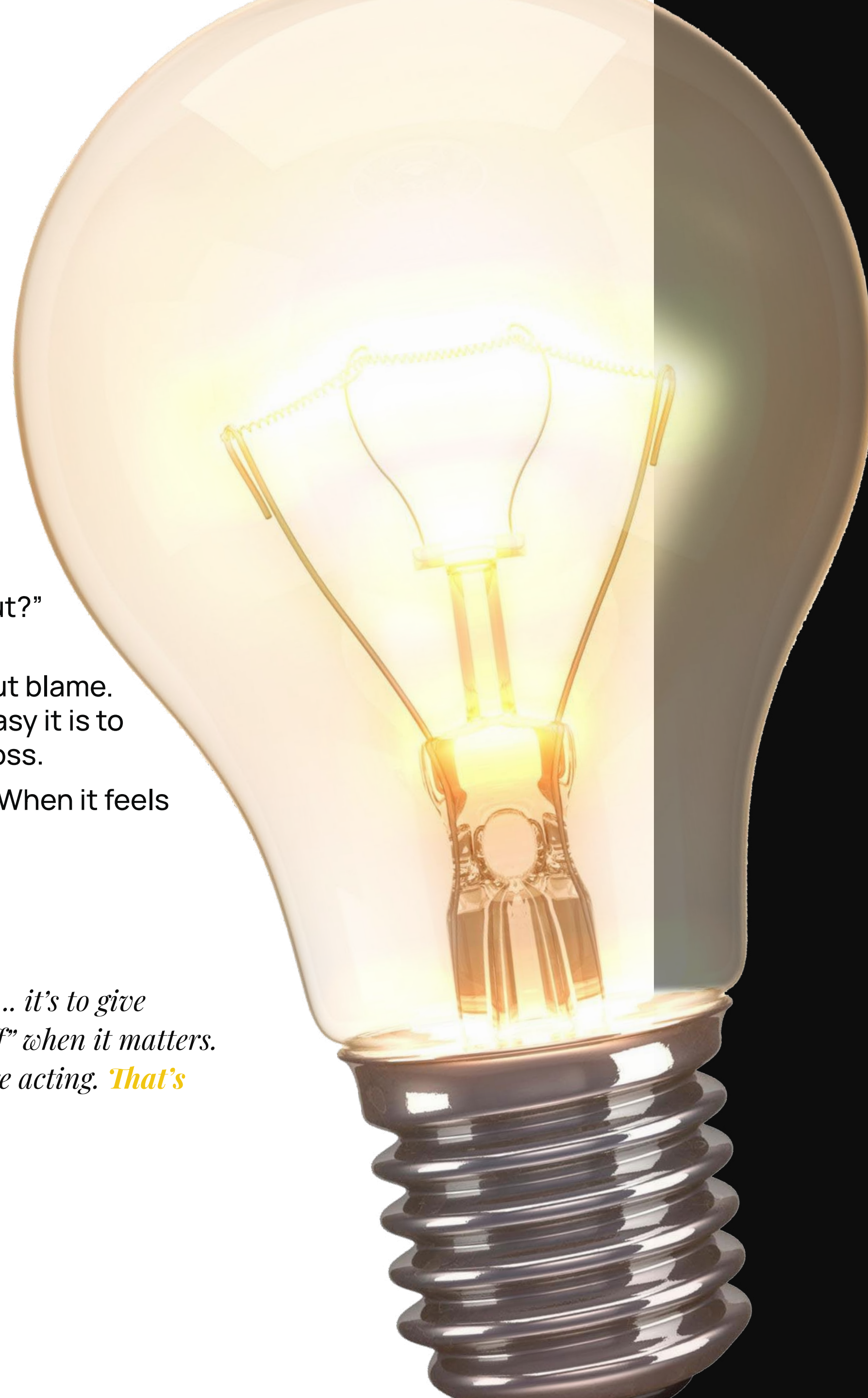
Make it **personally** relevant.

We tend to talk about risk at an organisational level but people don't experience risk that way. They're thinking: "do I look foolish?" "did I just get caught out?" "should I have spotted that?"

Shift the framing. Surface common mistakes without blame. Let people see how others responded. Show how easy it is to be fooled. Make it about judgement, not company loss.

When something feels abstract, it's easy to ignore. When it feels personal, you get their attention.

*Remember... The goal isn't to impart more information... it's to give people enough reference points that something feels "off" when it matters. We're trying to create the pause... the hesitation... before acting. **That's where better decisions start.***



06

Measure what changes.

Completion is easy to track. Impact is not. Look for operational signals: early reporting, better quality escalations, fewer repeat errors, faster response times. Engagement shows up in behaviours, not dashboards.

07

Use story as a structure... Not decoration.

Don't treat story as an "extra". Use it as the structure. Instead of adding a scenario at the start and then returning to the "real" content, build your learning around a single unfolding narrative.

A breach developing over time. A series of decisions with consequences. A situation that escalates.

Introduce recurring characters who appear across sessions, people learners recognise, follow, and form opinions about. Give them roles, pressures, and blind spots. Let people see how their decisions play out over time.

Each concept should appear because the story demands it, not because the slide deck does.

This changes how people engage. Instead of consuming isolated guidance, they follow progression. Cause leads to effect. Decisions carry forward. The learning becomes connected, and that's what makes it stick.

It also allows you to introduce complexity gradually. Early signals can be subtle. Later moments can escalate. People experience how situations unfold, not just what they look like in isolation.

You don't need high production. A sequence of emails. A timeline. A thread of messages. What matters is continuity and momentum. One story, carried through.

***Why it works:** We don't remember isolated bits of information very well. Story helps because it links things together... one thing leads to another and our brain has something to hold onto.*

When everything's fragmented, it stays that way in our brains. So we might recognise it in a quiz but won't spot it in real life.

Using recurring characters helps more than you'd think. Once people know who someone is, they start to build a picture of how they behave. So when they show up again, we're already paying attention.

That's why we have a cast of characters, hackers, and companies within our escape room "worlds"... easier for us to build a narrative, easier for learners to engage with it.

And there's a natural curiosity thing going on as well. If something's unfolding, people want to know what happens next. We don't need to force the engagement... it's already there.

And honestly... it's just closer to reality. Incidents don't come neatly packaged. They build over time with bits of information, missed signals, small decisions made along the way.

If our training looks like that, then it's MUCH easier for us to recognise the situation when it actually happens!!



08

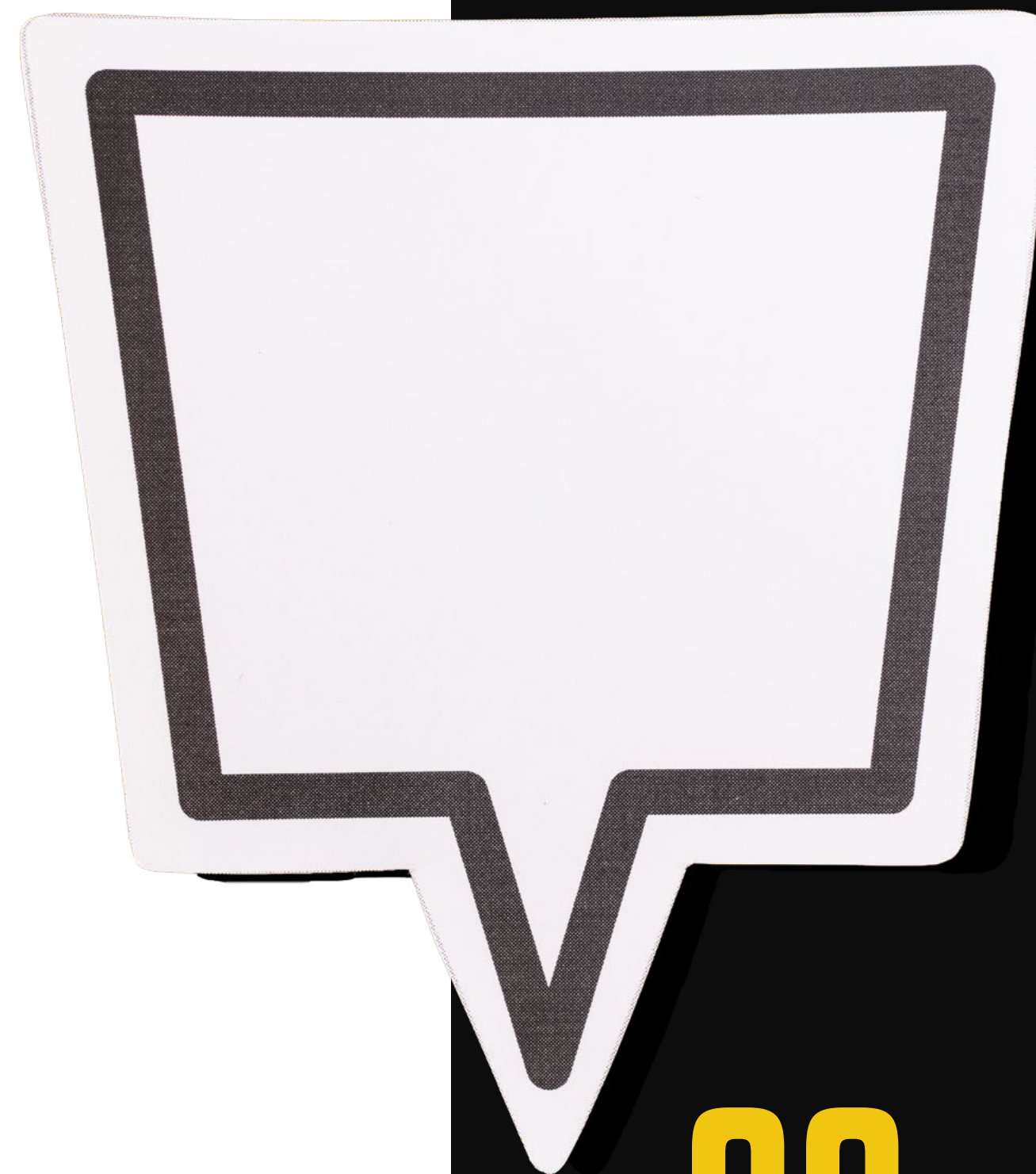
Make it **feel real**... Not like training.

Make It Feel Real... Not Like Training

The closer training is to real work, the stronger the impact. Use familiar tools, like email, chat, and your internal systems. Mirror the real workflows of your business. Reference current threats, not something from 2005.

If it feels like training, people switch off. If it feels real, they lean in.

Familiar contexts reduce cognitive friction. So the brain treats the information as relevant, not theoretical, the thing least available during real incidents.



09

Five minutes in. Not a special occasion.

Training tends to be completed as a solo activity but the real world isn't like that. Peer review is a powerful tool.

Introduce group decisions, shared answers, team discussions, and debriefs without blame.

Learning deepens when it's seen, questioned, shared.

10

Reflection... Not reinforcement.

Repetition alone doesn't create insight. Reflection does. Don't end sessions with summaries. Ask questions like "what would you do differently next time?"

Reflecting helps people integrate experience into their own mental models, and that's where behaviour change really happens.



12

Make it social, **not silent**.

Run a 5-minute "spot the risk" at the start of team meetings. Make it a regular thing, not a special event.

11

One question a week.

Send a one-question scenario in Slack or Teams once a week. Keep it fast, relevant and easy to respond to.



13

Strike while it's **still warm**.

Share a real (sanitised) incident within 48 hours of it happening. Recency makes it feel real and worthy of attention.

14

Let it come from someone they **trust**.

Ask managers to start training sessions with “why this matters to our team.” Context from someone they know lands better.



15

Give **the curious ones** somewhere to go.

Introduce harder challenges for people who want to dive deeper. Give your engaged learners somewhere to go next.

16

Real threats. Not made-up ones.

Let people submit suspicious emails and turn them into future training scenarios. Use real signals instead of generic examples.

17

Not always the **trainer's voice**.

Rotate who leads the discussion instead of always using a trainer. Ownership increases attention and participation.



18

Set the tone on **day one**.

Drop short scenarios into onboarding instead of saving it all for later. Set the tone early that security is important.

19

Praise it loud. Not just the mistakes.

Celebrate good catches publicly, not just mistakes privately. Reinforce the behaviours you actually want to see.



20

Turn learning into **one small action**.

Follow up training with one real-world task, e.g. check your social media settings. Bridge the gap between learning and action immediately.



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