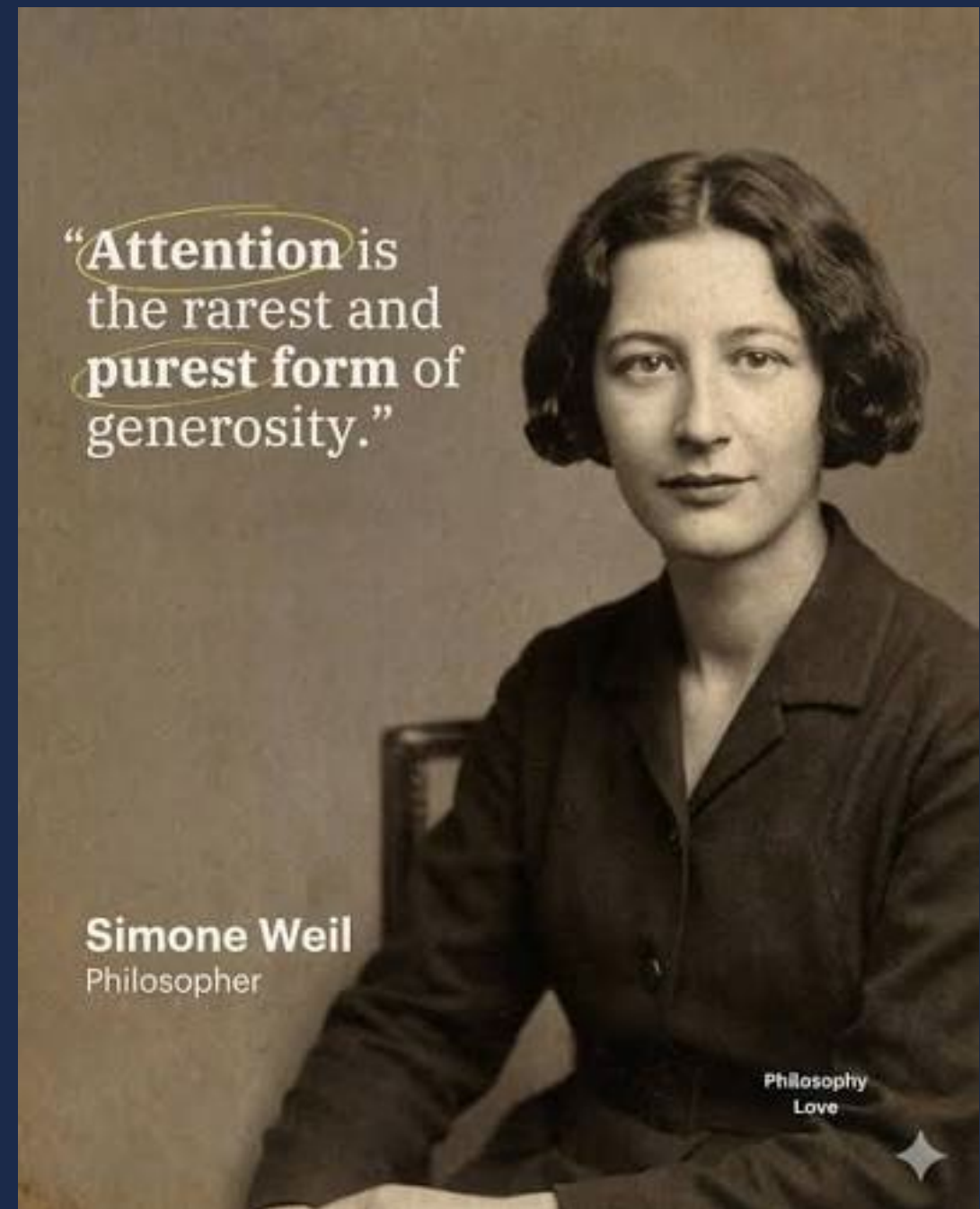


ANCHOR:

Training in the Attention Economy

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How long do we actually have?

2004

150 sec

~2.5 minutes

2012

75 sec

~1.25 minutes

Today

47 sec

less than a minute



What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention, and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.

— *Herbert Simon* —

AZ QUOTES

Every switch costs:

Attention

Clarity

Momentum

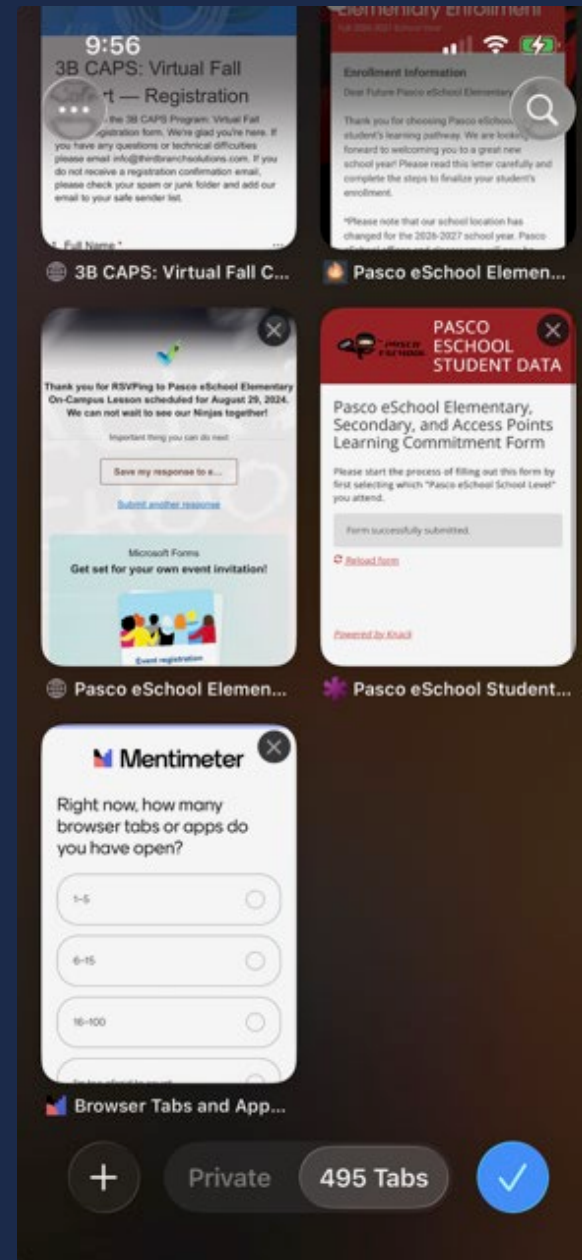
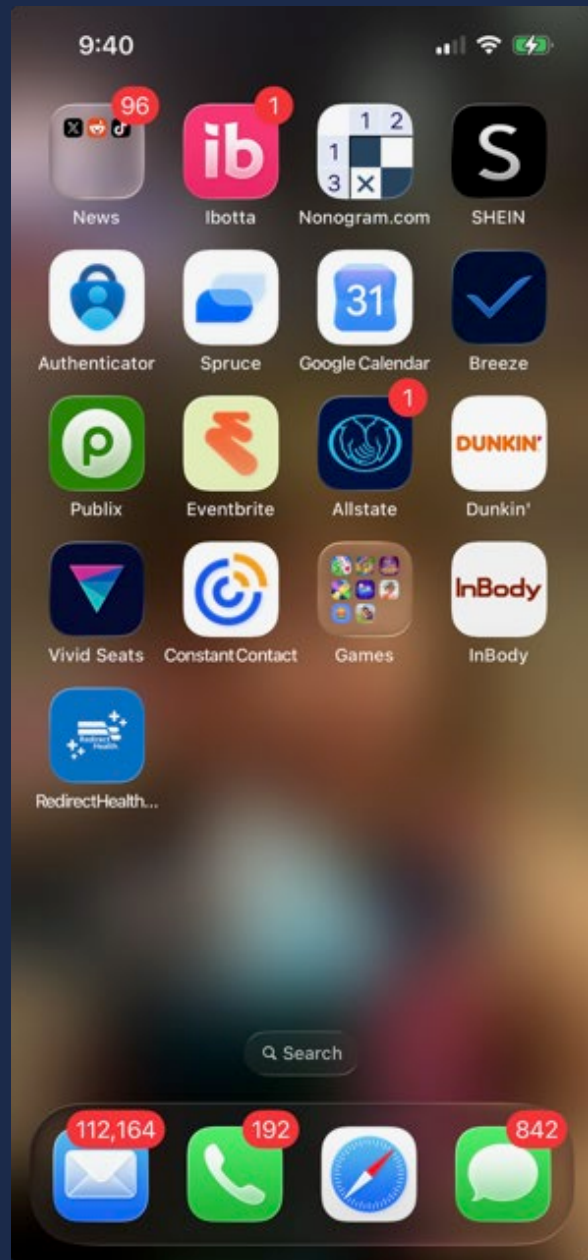
Show of Hands

HOW MANY TABS DO YOU KEEP OPEN?

- 0 – 5
- 6 – 15
- 16 – 100
- Too many to count

Current tabs open in my brain:





Part of your audience may never arrive.

Attention Residue

When learners move from one task to the next, part of their cognitive attention stays stuck on the previous one. This residue drags on everything that follows — focus, retention, performance.

Last email

Hallway chat

Previous session

TODAY'S TRAINING

Switching less — and switching cleanly — is the only fix.

The ANCHOR Framework

Six principles for training that earns attention — not assumes it.

A

Anchor Attention

Open in a way that earns focus immediately; Continuously earn attention; encourage participants to make a conscious effort to avoid common distractions

H

Humanize Delivery

Show up with energy, warmth, and authenticity

N

Name the Need

Define the behavior change, not just the topic

O

Operationalize

Turn one training into many reusable assets

C

Create Intentionally

Design for cognitive load, not content coverage

R

Reinforce

Extend learning beyond the session



Anchor Attention

Earn focus in the first 90 seconds. You don't get it by default.

- Open with a provocative question — one they haven't been asked before
- Use live polling to make the room's attention visible immediately
- Start with a statement that unsettles their assumptions
- Keep them curious



LESSONS FROM THIS GUY

- The first minute is the most important.
- Deliver on your promise.
- Good lighting always helps.
- Build in “re-engagement” mechanisms.
- “Wow factor” is nice.
- Identify your critical components.
- Ideally, have some sort of payoff at the end, to keep people “hooked.”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RF7sTliNiNGyYK6p8MXJEgDyUhRTsoF/view?pli=1>



Name the Need

Define the behavior change. Not the topic. Not the content. The change.

Information transfer X

"Participants will understand filing procedures."

"This session covers leave administration."

"An overview of the new docketing system."

Behavior change ✓

"After this, you will file a motion without calling the help desk."

"You will be able to answer the three leave questions you get every week."

"You will be able to easily catch and correct the three most common docketing errors."



Create Intentionally

Design for cognitive load. Every element earns its place or gets cut.

Cover one idea per slide.

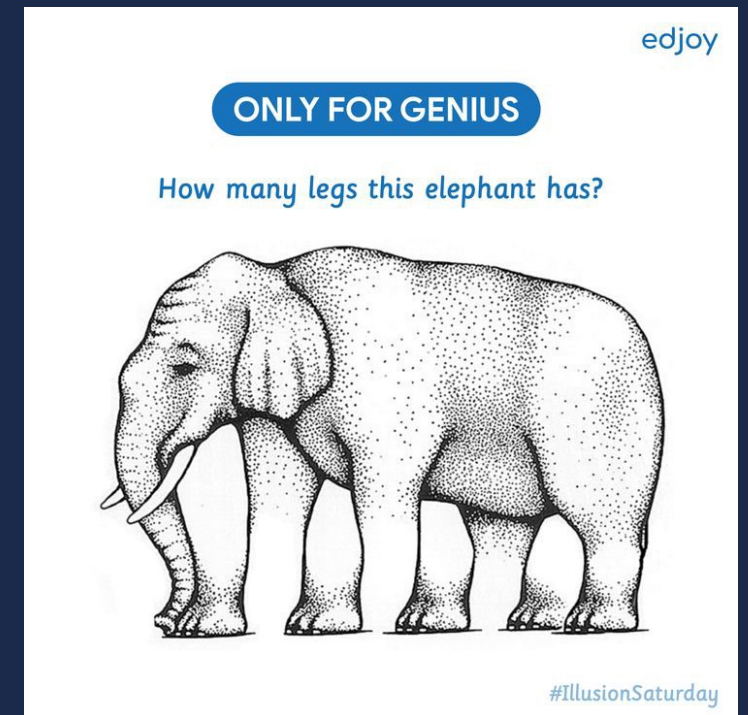
Less is more.

Cut the decorative

Every word, image, and animation competes for limited cognitive bandwidth.

Use white space intentionally

A sparse slide signals confidence. A cluttered slide signals anxiety.





Humanize Delivery

People remember people.

Energy is contagious

Your energy sets the floor for the room. Not the ceiling — the floor.

Imperfection is permission

When you stumble and recover, you give learners permission to be uncertain too.

Name things that are true

Acknowledge the distraction, the fatigue, the awkward transition. Reality earns trust.

Pause on purpose

Silence is not dead air. It is thinking time. Use it deliberately.

Attention please!



Attention please!



O Operationalize

One training session is the raw material. Multiply it.

ONE SESSION

On-demand recording

Auto-captioned transcript

Short clip / highlight reel

AI-generated summary

Micro-learning module

Follow-up resource doc

A.N.C.H.O.R.

TRAINING FOR THE ATTENTION ECONOMY

A

Anchor Attention

How will you hook your audience in the first 90 seconds?

N

Name the Need

What is the one clear behavior change they need?

C

Create Intentionally

What content can you cut to keep focus sharp?

H

Humanize Delivery

How will you build real human connection?

O

Operationalize

What practical tool will help them apply this?

R

Reinforce

How will you follow up and support them in 2 weeks?



Reinforce

Extend learning beyond the session itself.

The 24-hour nudge

One follow-up message the next day. One question. One reminder of the commitment they made.

The job aid

A one-page reference they can actually use. Not a summary of the slides — a tool.

The AI-generated debrief

Paste your session notes into Claude. Ask it to draft a participant summary and three reflection questions.

The check-in loop

Two weeks later: "What did you actually try? What happened?" Close the behavior loop.

ANCHOR in Action

Audit a session you're working on right now.

- A** What happens in the first 90 seconds? Does it earn attention or assume it?
- N** Can you state the behavior change in one sentence? Not the topic — the change.
- C** Does every slide have one idea? Could you cut 30% of the content and lose nothing essential?
- H** Where are the moments of human connection? Where might you be hiding behind the slides?
- O** How does this session live on? What asset will exist the day after delivery?
- R** What happens 24 hours later? Two weeks later? Is there a loop — or just an end?

AI as Thinking Partner

Not a replacement. A collaborator.

Sharpening learning objectives

"Here are my objectives. Rewrite them as behavior changes instead of topics."

Designing for cognitive load

"Here's my slide deck. Where am I putting too much on one slide?"

Building reinforcement materials

"Write a 24-hour follow-up email and a one-page job aid for this session."

Auditing against ANCHOR

"Here's my session outline. Run it through the ANCHOR framework and tell me where I'm weak."

ANCHOR

Training in the Attention Economy

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