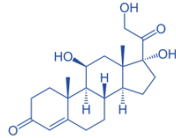


## Engaging our Brains

Our brains create various chemicals at different times depending on how they feel due to the impact of their environment. Let's briefly look at just a few and see how they impact our engagement levels.



### Cortisol (the stress hormone - fight or flight)



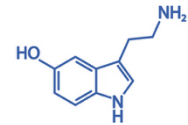
Regarding engagement, our brains have a sort of overload/stress trigger. When this trigger, which is different in each of us, is reached, the brain produces cortisol, which means it is under too much pressure. When our brain faces overwhelming information, it produces cortisol, and we lose focus.

Studies have shown that high levels of this chemical can disrupt memory retrieval and the ability to absorb more information or even understanding.

With the above in mind, we should health-check our presentations to avoid overloading our attendees with too much one-way information, as this reduces engagement. This will prevent you from overwhelming your learners and reduce your zone-out rate. 🤔

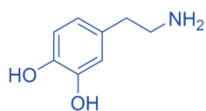
### Serotonin (think of it as our mood modifier)

Serotonin has been described as our brain's cheerleader. It is critical in helping us satisfy and maintain our audience's engagement levels.



To do this, our presentations need to be relevant and connected to the motivations of those attending our presentations. Our challenge is that these motivations may vary from person to person. Therefore, we must devote as much time as necessary to understand the needs of our audience.

### Dopamine (The "feel good" neurotransmitter)



Our brain is like a muscle and needs exercise, so there's nothing better than a good challenge. It also seeks novelty. When it receives these two things, it rewards us by releasing dopamine, which makes us feel good.

### Social Learning

Social Learning is the active learning process from our observations and interactions with others. In this case, the interaction among our audiences.

As you'll know from personal experience, presentations have historically been one-way transmissions of information sent from the presenter to the audience members with little or no interaction apart from visuals (slides).



We must encourage participation with and within our audiences to enable social learning. We want people to be inspired by observing and hearing other audience members as they interact. Then ideally, they will feel more able to engage and participate as well.