The Rehabilitation of Practice

- Reasons traditional "drill & practice" fails:
 - -lacks explicit fluency criterion as goal
 - -long durations stretch endurance and attention
 - -often the "chunks" are too big
- Reasons well engineered practice succeeds:
 - -explicit time-based goal for practice
 - -brief durations allow peak performance
 - -builds fluent elements before application

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Parameters for Effective Practice

- Chunk size: complexity of the behavior unit(s)
- Curriculum slice: number of different behavior units
- Performance duration: build fluency in "sprints" before endurance (sometimes 30 secs is too long)
- Total practice time: to achieve fluency in limited time, work with small curriculum slices
- Frequency and distribution of practice sessions: distributed is better than massed practice (cramming)



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Designing Practice Procedures

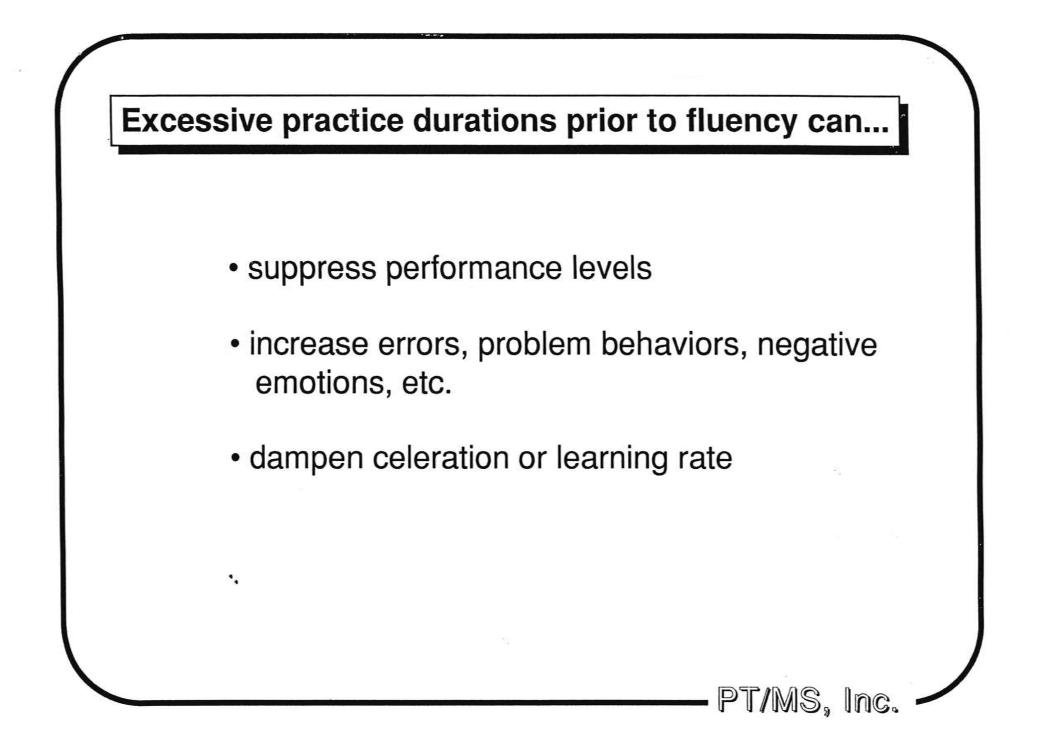
- Use efficient materials and procedures.
- Emphasize self-paced practice and measurement.
- Practice at least once per day, preferably many times spread out across the day.
- Measure many times, chart your best each day.
- Design practice procedures to support criterion tasks.
- Practice in as many channels as possible/appropriate.

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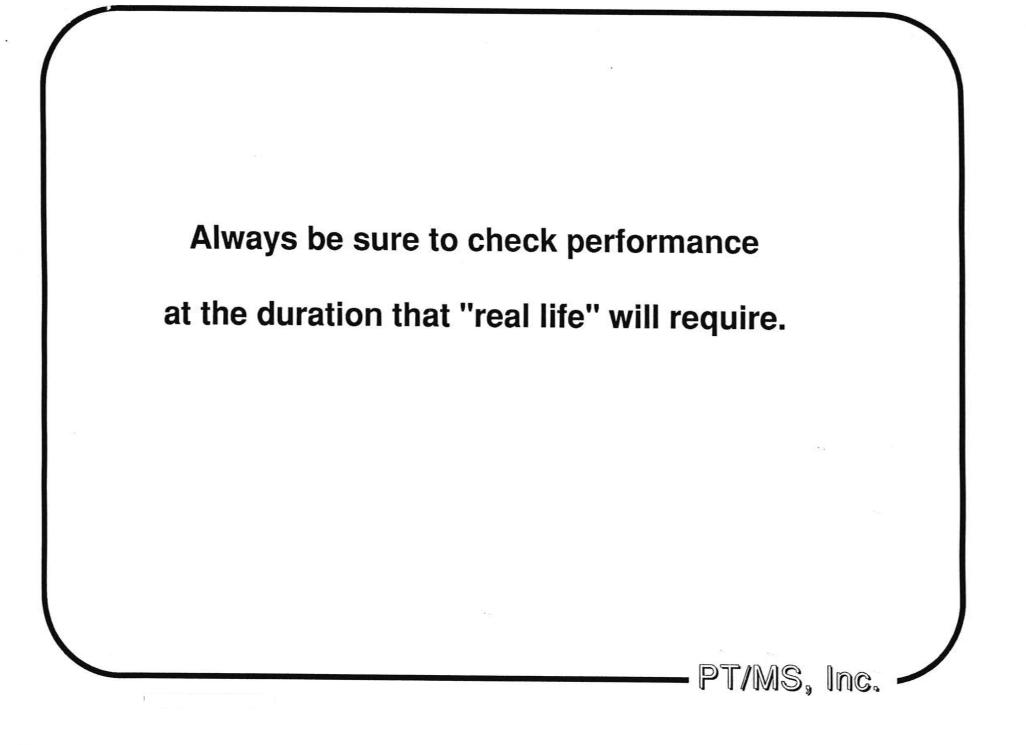
Designing Efficient Materials and Procedures

- Eliminate unnecessary or unnatural pacing or prompting.
- Allow learners to perform at their own pace without interruptions.
- Eliminate unnecessarily time-consuming response modes (output channels) and stimuli (e.g., lengthy text).
- Provide more response opportunities or examples than the performer can complete in the allotted time.
- Always test procedures and materials with yourself and with at least a few other experienced people, collecting snapshot performance measures.

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To build endurance, build fluency first. PT/MS, Inc. -



Example of a Chunking Sequence

- Use fact cards or computerized fluency exercises to master elementary facts, questions, discriminations
- Combine knowledge elements to master more complex Q & A or brief responses
- Use fluency aids to build flexible verbal repertoires alone or in groups
- Apply knowledge in simulations, games, and case study exercises

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In the beginning, many brief practices are better than a few long ones.

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