

# THE RECALL FACTOR

## *Why People Remember How You Close a Conversation More Than How You Start It*

In Indian pharma, managers live in constant conversations — a hurried doctor call, a rep review squeezed into travel time, a quick negotiation with a distributor. We put energy into the opening — the first impression, the initial pitch, the agenda. Yet behavioural psychology shows it's the final moments that shape memory, influence, and trust.



The Recency Effect, documented in cognitive psychology, proves that people recall the end of an interaction more vividly than the start. What this means: even a strong conversation can be undone by a rushed or careless closing. Conversely, a meeting that starts unremarkably but ends with clarity, warmth, or conviction will linger positively.

For pharma managers, this insight is game-changing. Every rep debrief, every doctor call, every distributor check-in is a chance to leave a residue of trust or fatigue. Your close determines which one it is.



## What This Looks Like in Pharma

- **Doctor Calls:** A rep may start well, but if the call ends abruptly, the doctor remembers the rush, not the science.
- **Rep Reviews:** A manager's tough coaching is accepted when the close balances critique with belief in the rep's ability.
- **Distributor Meetings:** Ending with shared next steps ensures alignment, while ending with ambiguity creates follow-ups and friction.

## The Exit Effect

### 1. The Memory Principle

Cognitive science shows people remember the emotional peak and the ending of any interaction (the "peak-end rule"). Ask yourself: Did I close with clarity, calm, and conviction — or with haste?

### 2. The Tone of Trust

Leadership presence is carried in the final note — a pause of respect, a phrase of belief, a reminder of partnership. A close should sound less like a transaction, more like continuity.

### 3. The Signature Line

Leave behind one anchoring sentence that lingers:  
To a Doctor → "I'll return not just with data, but with answers that matter for your patients."  
To a Rep → "I trust you with this because I've seen your resilience in tougher weeks."  
To a Distributor → "Let's both walk away today certain of the 15th — certainty saves both of us energy."

### 4. The Echo Exercise

At day's end, replay the last minutes of your key conversations. Not what was said in detail, but the residue it left. Was it pressure, trust, or indifference? The echo is what they'll remember tomorrow.

### Takeaway

Speed often tempts us to rush out of conversations — but in pharma, the end note is the echo. A well-closed interaction leaves clarity, belief, and alignment that lasts long after the words themselves.

Or as Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet:  
*"The readiness is all."*

What you leave behind is often remembered more than what you began with.

