

AI Learning's Hidden Effort Tax

It's not just what you learn—it's how long you keep going.

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second

Competition Placement

MIT's ChemE Sports team, led by Veronica Calzadilla Sosa, placed second at regionals in their first competition.

This achievement wasn't a product of innate talent or shortcut mastery. It emerged from sustained effort—repeated office hours, team collaboration, and iterative problem-solving under pressure. The real metric isn't the result, but the time spent wrestling with uncertainty.

Source: MIT News • Published October 23, 2026

<https://news.mit.edu/2026/persistence-teamwork-healthy-competition-veronica-calzadilla-sosa-1023>



01

Struggle is the curriculum

This reframes AI learning not as a race to completion, but as a practice of resilience. Every failed model, every misunderstood concept, is not a failure—but a signal that you're still in the learning zone. The cost isn't time alone; it's the emotional energy of continuing when the path is unclear.



02

Competition fuels collaboration

For free AI learners, this suggests that the most effective learning environments aren't curated tutorials, but communities where struggle is visible and shared. The real ROI of AI learning isn't just a certificate—it's the network of peers who've also been stuck, and who can help you unstuck.

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