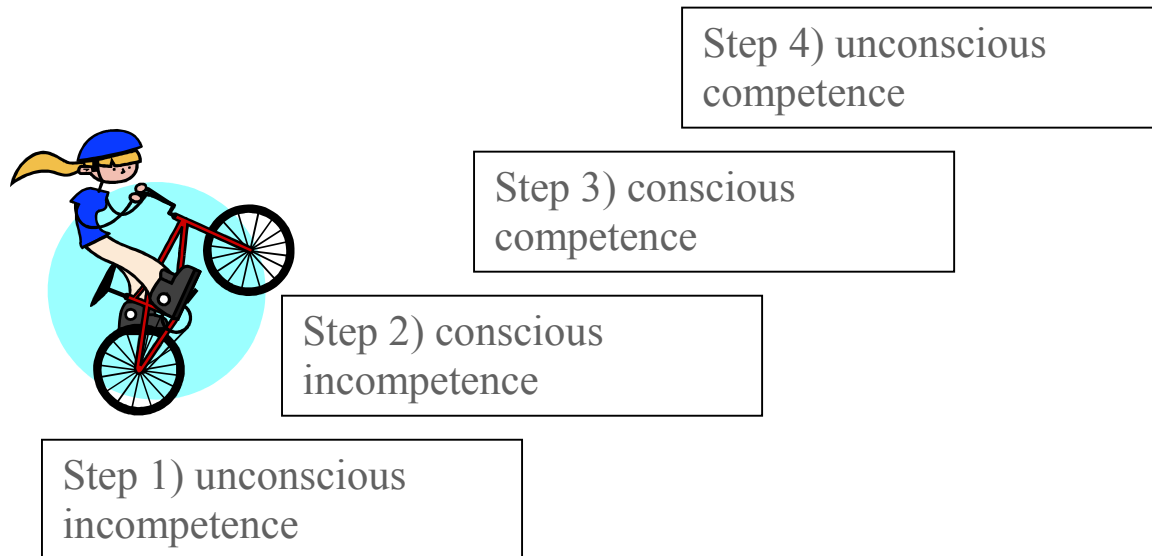


To learn and teach new skills you need to be conscious of what you and the trainee do and do not know. The competence ladder makes us aware of the different levels.



Level 1 - Unconscious Incompetence (You Don't Know that You Don't Know)

At this level trainees are not aware of their lack of skills. They may enter the first day at work with a high confidence that far exceeds their abilities.

Level 2 - Conscious Incompetence (You Know that You Don't Know)

At this level they find that there are skills they need to learn. The trainees may be shocked to discover that there is so much to learn. As they realize that their abilities are limited, the confidence drops. The trainees go through an uncomfortable period and need lots of instruction and support from the supervisor.

Level 3 - Conscious Competence (You Know that You Know)

At this level they acquire the new skills and knowledge. They put their learning into practice and gain confidence in carrying out the tasks or jobs involved. They are concentrating on the performance of the activities. They are aware of their new skills and work on refining them. The supervisor can slowly reduce the degree of directives and feedback. Interaction with the trainees is very important so that you can find out how to coach them in the best way. A supervisor who is at this level is often a very good teacher, since he/she is aware of what he does. He/she can easily explain how he carries out the tasks.

Level 4 - Unconscious Competence (You Don't Know that You Know!)

At this level new skills become habits, and the trainees perform the task without conscious effort and with automatic ease. They may not reach this level, even though it's the supervisors job to motivate them to reach as far as they can perform. A supervisor at this level has to be aware that the trainee started at level 1 or 2. The supervisor may have forgotten the difficulties in carrying out special tasks and must concentrate on giving very clear instructions.