



Do you know what you are capable of? Perhaps you've never thought about it, or perhaps you've simply forgotten what you've done in the past.

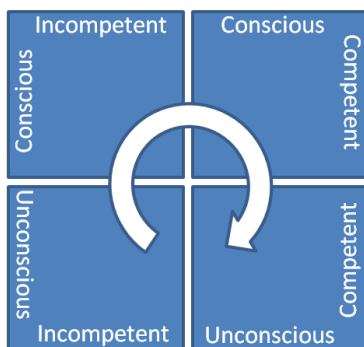
People, generally, have a far broader set of capabilities than they believe they have, and are certainly more capable than they are prepared to admit to others.

Imagine how much more productive you could be if you were fully aware of your capabilities, and comfortable in putting them to good use. Imagine, as well, what an organisation might achieve, if all of its people had this awareness of their capabilities.

Regardless of how well you believe you understand your capabilities, it can be surprising what comes to the surface when you spend some time really focusing on the matter.

When developing new talents, the traditional wisdom suggests that people move through four phases:

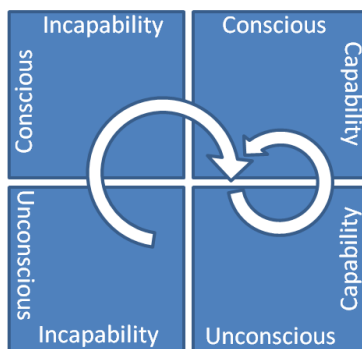
1. Unconscious incompetence
2. Conscious incompetence
3. Conscious competence
4. Unconscious competence



This gets people to a state in which they can apply their new talent in a way which is second-nature to them.

Historically, this may have worked well when people were being trained to do repetitive work as efficiently as possible. However, in non-repetitive environments, it is important to maintain awareness of whether the talent remains effective and appropriate.

PeakDepths believes there should be a continuous cycling between phases 3 & 4, so that conscious capability is maintained. The word 'capability' being preferred over the word 'competence' as this better fits the practical and grounded approach taken.



Creating conscious capability starts by helping individuals explore what they have been good at in the past and what they are currently good at. This exploration shouldn't constrain itself to their organisational role, but should look across their whole life to unearth capabilities which may well be under-utilised and transferable. Finally, delving deeper, it is usually possible to discover some previously unused capabilities which can be thrown into the pot.

It's worth noting at this point, that as people come together into teams, an additional layer of 'team capabilities' comes into being (what the team is capable of, but which the members individually are not). This layer, too, deserves conscious attention for the same reasons.

Identifying capabilities is the first half of the picture; the second half is the environment in which they are to be used. Typically, this consists of the role, the team, the organisation and the external environment in which it operates.

Two options are now possible:

- Adjust the available capabilities to meet the needs of the organisation
- Adjust the needs of the organisation to reflect the capabilities that are available

These are, of course, two ends of a spectrum of possibilities. However, the important point is to recognise that there are options.

It should never simply be the case that organisational visions are pursued at all costs – it can often be better to rebuild a vision around the available capabilities.

In summary, therefore, rather than seeing unconscious capability as the end point for learning, continuing to 'loop back' through unconscious capability creates increased flexibility and responsiveness, whilst delivering greater rewards.

This is the process we call:
"Creating Conscious Capability"