

The Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition

Five levels of progress in learning a skill

Stage		Characteristics	Standard of Work	Autonomy
5	Expert	No longer relies on rules / guidelines / maxims Grasp of situations & decision making intuitive Vision of what is possible	Excellence achieved with relative ease	Able to take responsibility for going beyond existing standards and creating own interpretations
4	Proficient	Sees what is most important in a situation Perceives deviations from the normal pattern Maxims vary according to situation	Fully acceptable standard achieved routinely	Able to take full responsibility for own work, and coach others
3	Competent	Copes with crowdedness Sees actions partially in terms of LT goals Has standardized and routinized procedures	Fit for purpose, though may lack refinement	Able to achieve most tasks using own judgement
2	Advanced Beginner	Action based on attributes or aspects Situational perception still limited All aspects are given equal importance	Straightforward tasks likely to be completed to an acceptable standard	Able to achieve some steps using own judgement, but supervision needed for overall task
1	Novice	Adherence to rules or plans Little situational perception No discretionary judgement	Unlikely to be satisfactory unless closely supervised	Needs close supervision or instruction

Adapted from: Dreyfus, Stuart E., *Formal Models vs. Human Situational Understanding: Inherent Limitations on the Modelling of Business Expertise*, University of California, Berkeley, 1981

- **The model measures skill, not the person**
- **The learner can work more autonomously, and coach others, when s/he gets to higher levels of experience**