Are you an unconscious incompetent or a conscious competent and do you know the difference? These are elements of the Four Stages of Learning, introduced in the 1970s and still widely used today. The creator of this concept originally used terms like "ignorant" and "phony" to describe his own feelings as he went through the process of learning a new skill. The process takes one from not knowing what you don't know to knowing it so well, you don't even think about it anymore.

When hiring at the management level, most hiring managers are looking for someone who is at least a conscious competent, or someone who understands how to do the job (perhaps with some conscious involvement in its execution).

In other words, you want to hire someone who already has developed certain skills and comes equipped with competencies (also called "soft skills") for the role.

Competencies in The Job Profiling Process

A competency is often defined as "an underlying, deep, and enduring personal characteristic of an individual that predicts behavior in a wide variety of situations and results in effective or superior performance". Your job profile needs to identify not only the technical skills a candidate possesses, but his behavioral competencies as well.

To do this you need to:
1. **Define the organization culture:**
   - What is it really like to work here?
   - How do we define success?
   - Do we really understand and live by our own vision statement?

2. **Define the management culture:**
   - What is the management style of the immediate manager?
   - How does the manager interact with staff?

3. **Define essential job activities and responsibilities:**
   - List everything that is involved in day-to-day working.
   - Have someone who is doing the job to add all job activities that they can think of.

4. **Define all technical competencies and skills required for the job:**
   - Once you have a list of all activities that are performed in this role, record every single competency and skill that is needed to do the job.

5. **Define behavioral competencies:**
   - Past behaviour will tell you how a person will react in a similar situation.
   - What characteristics did previous successful employees possess?

Working your way through this process can be daunting, which is why it doesn’t get done often enough. The benefits far outweigh the challenge of performing this duty.

**Benefits of Knowing the Required Competencies**
Documenting the processes, skills and personal attributes needed for a successful hire takes the guesswork out of hiring. It eliminates candidates who might be hired based on someone’s “gut feelings”. Perhaps most importantly, it creates the platform for the interview questions where these skills and competencies are identified and explored.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Top Candidate Job Interview Questions (for Hiring Managers) - know the top interview
questions that will help you find the best fit for your team.

Leadership and Management Competencies List - will help construct your own leadership and management competency models.