KNOWLEDGE OPERATIONS

DRIVES CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

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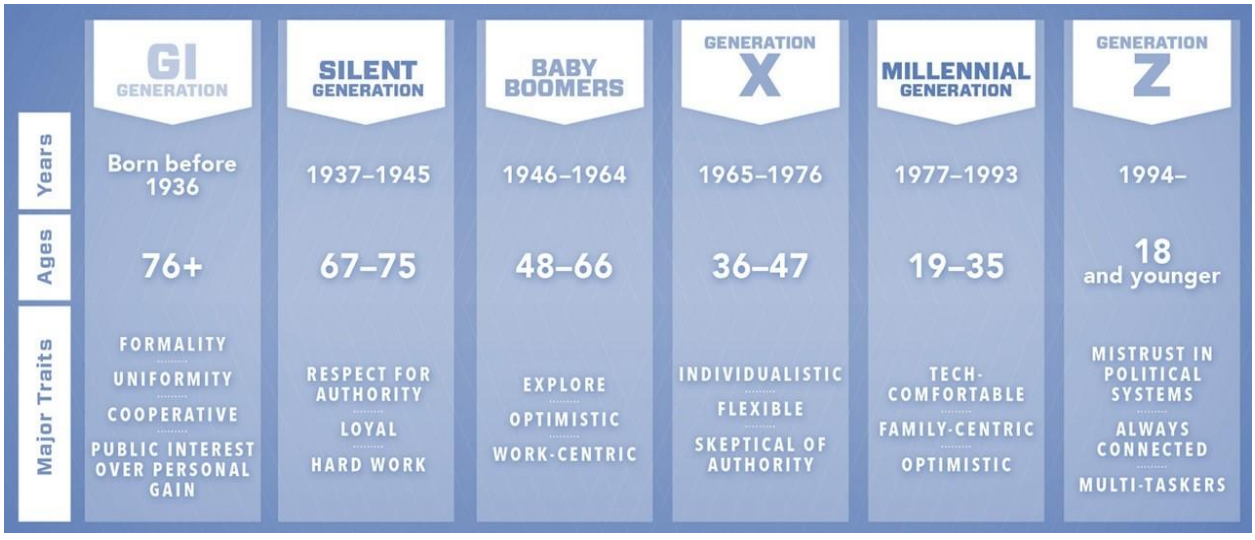
As we learn to live in an interconnected world with longer lifespans and ever-growing expectations, we must come to terms with the fact that the goals and objectives of the world as we know it are changing. This is in part due to the collision of three distinct cultures with different perspectives co-existing in an interconnected world. As today’s Boomers are working till 65/70, Gen X is in their prime, and Millennials are entering the workforce, we see these groups struggling to find their place as they endeavor to understand how to coordinate, collaborate, and communicate. The following 10 years will be prevalent with change and transformation as our world evolves out of an industrial society into an information environment were paradigms and perspectives become their own reality. Thus, all three cultures must find a way to coexist and build a symbiotic professional relationship that is mutually beneficial to all, despite their different perspectives, paradigms, and value propositions.

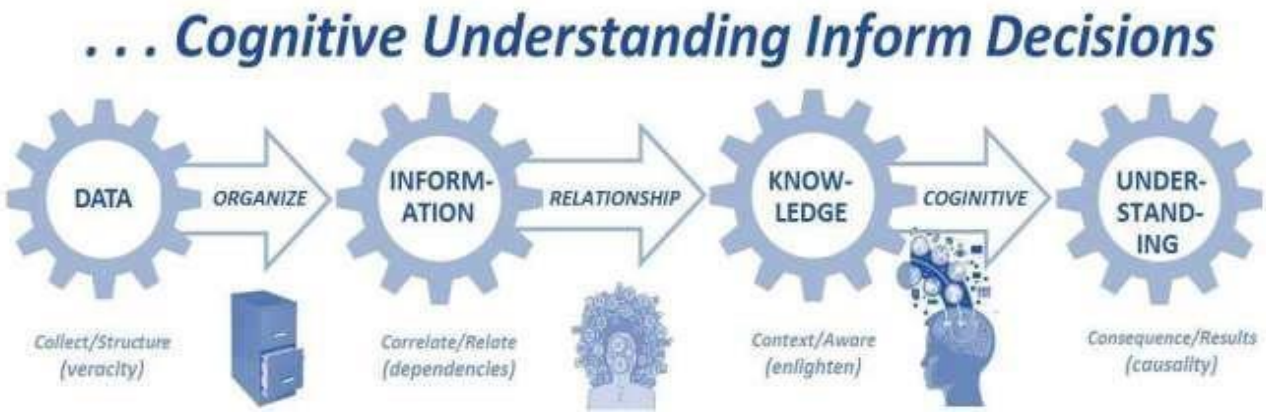


To facilitate the evolution of a relationship between these groups in an effort to establish synergy, they must realize the need of create a symbiotic relationship. To that end, it must be acknowledged that the evolution and maturation of understanding is predicated on the teacher's skills to effectively impart knowledge of the knowns, the student's ability to understand the unknown, and their collaborative effort to explore the unknowable. The following two articles provide a framework and outline the need for a formal process to accomplish this critical imperative. The means to coordinate, collaborate, and communicate have never been more vital than they are in today's interconnected world as it rapidly evolves into the age of knowledge.

As ascribed in the paper "Evolving Knowledge into Understanding", the process of developing knowledge through cognition is formulated to mature one's appreciation of how to think. Those issues, perceptions, and paradigms that influence how things are viewed directly impact their approach to shaping the environment. A conscious competence model offers readers the opportunity to assess their cognitive level and provides criteria for critical thinking. Finally, the implications and effects of their awareness serve to mature their understanding and evolve their perspective.

Ultimately, strategic trade-offs are made through cost-benefit analysis to enhance knowledge and develop understanding.

- **Data** *is observed, captured and organized into information*
- **Information** *is fused in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy through critical thinking into knowledge*
- **Knowledge** *correlated against a Frame Of Reference (**FOR**) and current Situational Awareness (**SA**) is developed into understanding which is the basis which informed and enlightened decisions are made*



This article further expresses the level of awareness, learning, teaching, and intellectual competence. By examining the conscious competence learning model, we begin to understand how to assess the level at which we are operating and the inherent risks that result. Understanding that one does not always understand allows being receptive to exploring the art of the possible. By adopting an open-minded approach to issues as they arise, one can increase awareness and heighten SA to make informed decisions that meet organizational objectives.

1 – UNCONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE:

- *person is not aware of the existence or relevance of the skill area*
- *person is not aware that they have a particular deficiency in the area concerned*
- *person might deny the relevance or usefulness of the new skill*
- *person must be conscious of their incompetence before awareness of new skill for learning to begin*

2 – CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE:

- *person becomes aware of the existence and relevance of their skill*
- *person is therefore aware of their deficiency in this area, ideally by attempting or trying to use the skill*
- *person realizes that by improving their skill or ability in this area, their effectiveness will improve*
- *Ideally, the person has a measure of the extent of their deficiency in the relevant skill as well as a measure of what level of skill is required to achieve their own competence*

3 – CONSCIOUS COMPETENCE:

- *person achieves, conscious competence in a skill when they can perform it reliably at will*
- *person must concentrate and think to perform the skill*
- *person performs the skill without assistance*
- *person will not reliably perform skills unless thinking about it, it is not yet second nature or automatic*
- *person should be able to demonstrate the skill to another, but is unlikely to teach it to another person*
- *person should ideally continue to practice new skill and commit to becoming unconsciously competent*

4 – UNCONSCIOUS COMPETENCE:

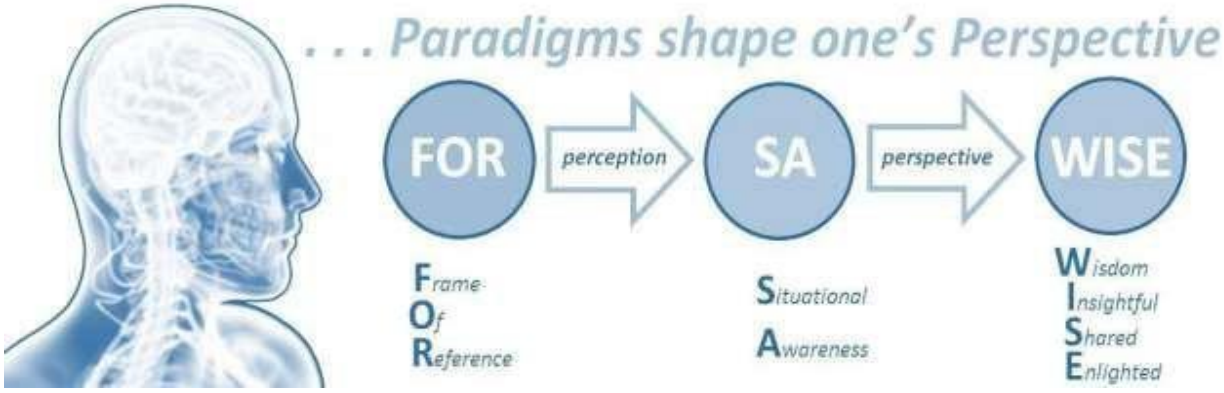
- *skill becomes so practiced that it enters the unconscious parts of the mind, it becomes second nature*
- *common examples are driving, sports activities, typing, and manual dexterity*
- *it becomes possible for specific skills to be performed while doing something*
- *person might now be able to teach others the skill concerned, although after some time of being unconsciously competent, the person might actually have difficulty explaining exactly how they do the skill which is now largely instinctual*

At level 3 of the cognitive model is the stage of evolving knowledge into understanding. At this step, the individual is consciously aware but experiences difficulty correlating relationships and thus finds it difficult to fuse the facts and synthesize the knowledge into understanding. Therefore, it is difficult for them to formulate the implications of information and, in turn, they are unable to estimate its effects upon the environment. The limitations of these approaches make it increasingly challenging for them to determine or even forecast future dynamics without a well-defined mental model. At this level, the individual is predisposed to eschew a strategic and deterministic approach that fosters an enlightened expectation of future impacts. Here, the decision maker's inability to

fuse multiple problem sets into a unified approach for cohesive resolution hinders their ability to act strategically. Thus, the lack of mature cognition and heightened SA prevents these individuals from becoming fully informed which precludes autonomously linked enlightened decision.

Notably, level 3 is where teaching, adapting and error detection activities are performed. At this level, the individual is receptive to acknowledging when new information does not fit properly into the model based on their FOR, perceptions, or expectations. Of course, ignoring or forcing the new information to fit could place the entire premise and course of action at risk and send the individual back to the beginning, at which they were unaware that they were unaware. Further, it is at these stages that imparting knowledge to others is most beneficial, as it helps both students and teachers become aware of their deficiencies.

It is through this symbiotic relationship at levels 2 and 3 of the cognitive model that sharing one's experiences and collaborative understanding opens one's perspective to the realm of options and the art of possibilities. It is through this exchange that teachers and students find mutually beneficial opportunities to explore answers to previously unexplored questions. Individuals in stage 3 should be chosen to teach those in stage 2 as they expand their knowledge and broaden their FOR in preparation to ascend to stage 4. It is from this symbiotic, mutually beneficial relationship between student and teacher that a reflective reassessment of perceptions is necessary to elevate both individuals to their next level of cognition.



Many have remarked that intuition or military genius exposed by Clausewitz as *coup d'oeil* is depicted in a heightened level of fully conscious competence or Level 4 of our model. Roger Kane spoke of a fifth level at which the individual responded with optimal, instantaneous, and instinctive reaction. Some refer to this as being in the, zone. At this level, an individual becomes able to achieve self-awareness and make accurate assessments of their abilities based on an understanding of current conditions, or what some would call wisdom. By leveraging opportunities in this adaptive approach, threats can be mitigated and weaknesses overcome.

Having an awareness of one's limitations enables an individual to approach their true capacity. Indeed, it is not what one knows that makes them an asset but the awareness of what they do not know, which precludes them from being a liability. Moreover, it is through this awareness that they can establish their overall realized value to an organization. For when they understand that they do not understand, they can embark on a journey of awareness and enlightenment to acquire wisdom.

The Harvard Business Review article on "Develop Deep Knowledge in your Organization" by Dorothy Leonard speaks to the difference of information management and knowledge operations. It brings to mind the supposition by John Nisbett that we are "Drowning in Information and Starving for Knowledge." The HBR paper argues that firms compete on what they do, but succeed based on how they do it. Ultimately, their ability to compete and succeed is determined by the relentless focus and dedication to their purpose or why they exist.

This is served by data that substantiates their decisions, information organized to illustrate the dependencies of those relationships that affect outcomes, and knowledge, which provides the contextual understanding of why it is essential. Thus, leaders are well-advised to empower their team to think beyond requirements (what must be done), processes (how it must be achieved), and even objectives. By imparting knowledge of their intent, their teammates will be empowered to fulfill goals that will evolve and transform the organization, moving it forward on its journey toward an ascribed future state in fulfillment of its vision for a bright tomorrow.