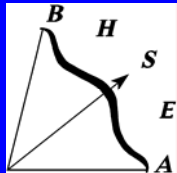


Are you competent to assess competence?

Eur Ing **Kevin Fear** BSc(Hons) CEng MICE
MIHT MIOSH

Head of HS&E, ConstructionSkills



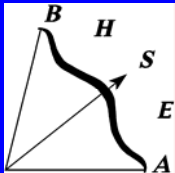
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Introduction

- What is “competence”?
- Journey and not a destination
- What does CDM require?
- What advice does the ACoP give?
- Who sets the standards?



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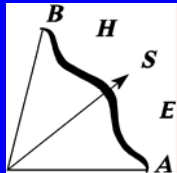
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Definition of competence

Able to do a particular thing

- **S**kill
- **K**nowledge
- **A**ttitude
- **T**raining
- **E**xperience



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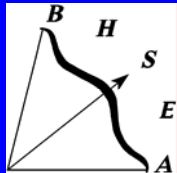
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Definition of competence

The ability to undertake responsibilities and to perform activities to a recognised standard on a regular basis

- Thinking skills, knowledge and experience
- Attitudes - willingness to work to agreed standards, rules and procedures



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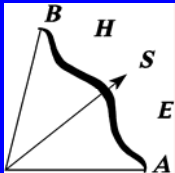
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Definition of competence

Qualifications, experience and qualities appropriate for their duties

- Acquisition of the knowledge needed for their tasks
- Knowledge of the hazards and failings of the equipment they are responsible for
- Knowledge and understanding of the working practices of their organisation
- Ability to communicate with their peers, their staff and their supervisors
- Appreciation of their own limitations



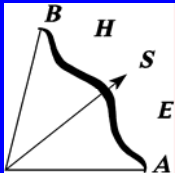
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Competence in context

- Senior managers' expectations
- Senior managers competence
- Staff selection and recruitment
- Supervisory system
- Staff appraisal and reward system
- Colleague behaviour and peer group pressure



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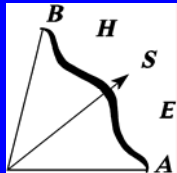
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American proverb

“As we know, there are known knowns. These are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns. That is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns – the ones we don’t know we don’t know”

– Donald Rumsfeld , 12 February 2002



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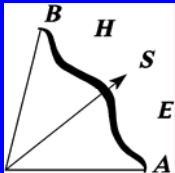
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	competence	incompetence
conscious	3 - conscious competence	2 - conscious incompetence
unconscious	4 - unconscious competence	1 - unconscious incompetence

Oriental proverb

- He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool - shun him **unconscious incompetence**
- He who knows not, and knows that he knows not is ignorant - teach him **conscious incompetence**
- He who knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep - wake him **unconscious competence**
- But he who knows, and knows that he knows , is a wise man - follow him **conscious competence**

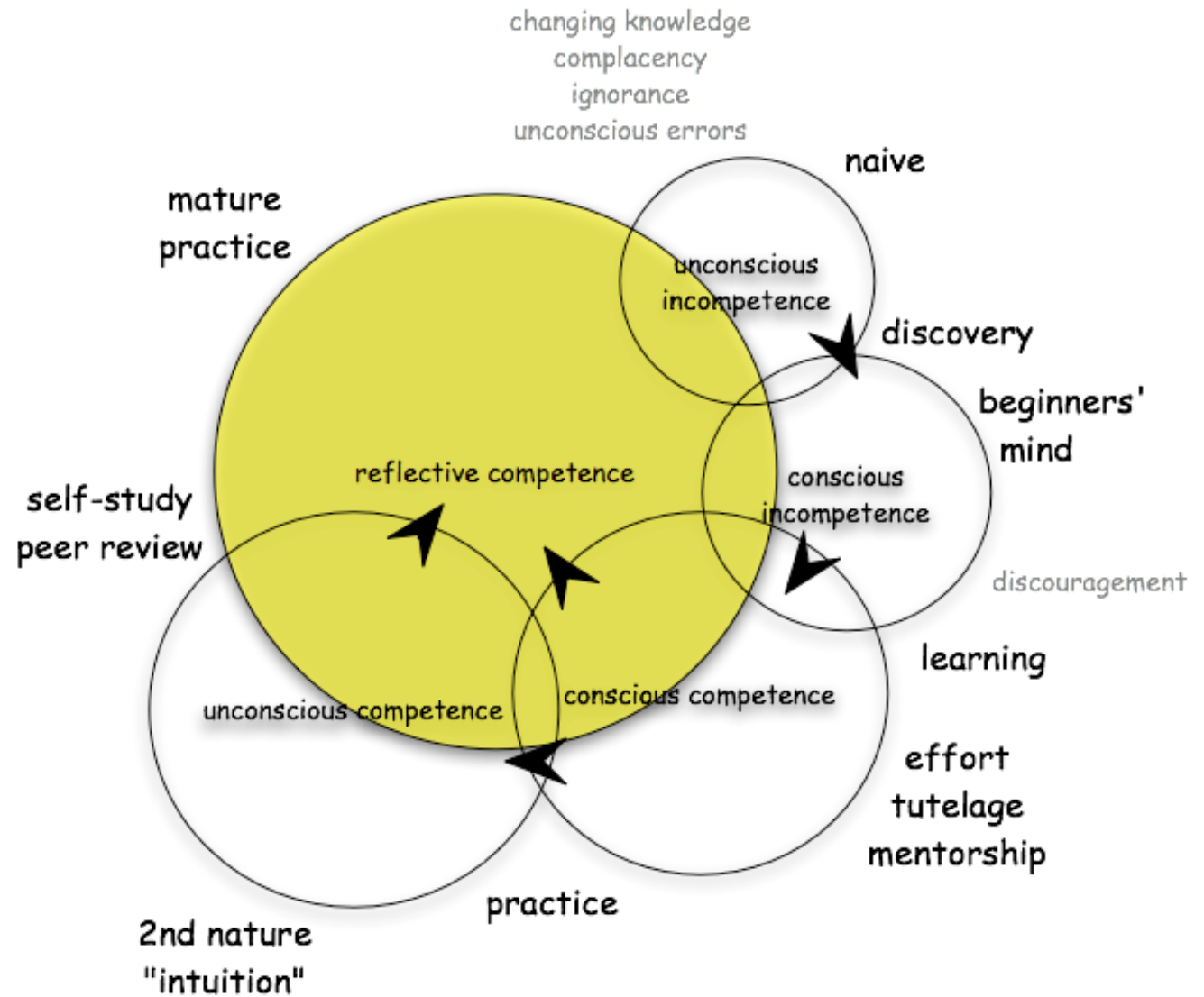


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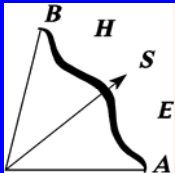
- Courtesy of Will Taylor Chair, Department of Homeopathic Medicine, National College of Natural Medicine, Portland, Oregon, USA, March 2007



Attitude for reflective competence

Willingness to:

- Be self critical and recognise gaps in skills or knowledge,
- Accept guidance from peers, supervisors and managers
- Participate fully in training opportunities
- Be constructively challenging of inappropriate standards and behaviours



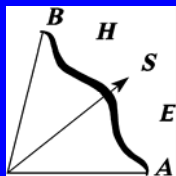
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Conclusion – competence is a journey not a destination

- Competence is not a static “thing”
- Competence can be lost as well as gained
- A measure of competence (maturity) is when an individual acknowledges gaps in skills and knowledge (reflective competence)



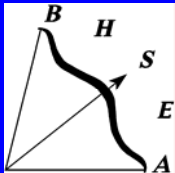
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Education and qualifications

- Education (school, college, university)
- Training (at work, in own time)
- Qualifications (gauge knowledge and skill but only at the time of testing)
- Professional review requirements



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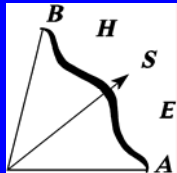
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Who sets the standards?

Who determines the required level of skills, knowledge, training and experience are needed to be competent for a particular job or task?

- Government?
- Institutions?
- Educational standard setting bodies?
- Employers?
- Courts (test cases)?



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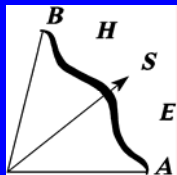
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What the Law requires

Reg 4 - Competence

- No person shall appoint a CDM duty holder unless he has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the duty holder is competent
- No person shall accept an appointment unless he is competent
- No person shall instruct a worker for design or construction work unless the worker is competent or under the supervision of a competent person



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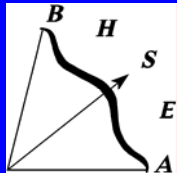
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ACoP

“Assessment (of competence) should focus upon the needs of the particular project and be proportionate to the risks and complexity of the work”

Para 194



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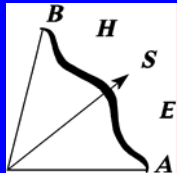
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ACoP

To be competent and organisation and individual must have sufficient:

- knowledge of the specific tasks to be undertaken and the risks the work will entail***
- experience and ability to carry out the duties in relation to the project*** Para 195

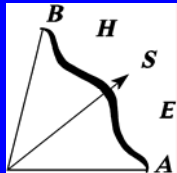


ACoP

Competence of organisations

- Stage 1 – assessment of a company's organisational and arrangements for H&S
- Stage 2 – assessment of a company's experience and track record

Para 203 and 204



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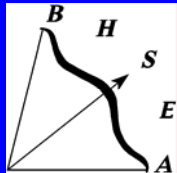


ACoP

Competence of individuals

- Stage 1 – assessment of the person's task knowledge (qualifications, training records, CPD or lifelong learning)
- Stage 2 – assessment of the individual's experience and track record

Para 215 and 216



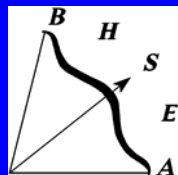
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ACoP appendix 4

Criteria	Standard	Examples
Individual	Appropriate qualifications and experience	Site managers- SMSTS CSkills H&S test Professionals- Institutions



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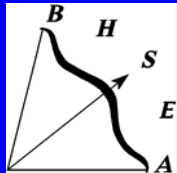
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So, what should I do?

Ask yourself:

- What are the needs of this particular project?
- What are the risks?
- Are the risks significant?
- How complex is the project?
- What SK TE are needed?
- How can we assess attitude?



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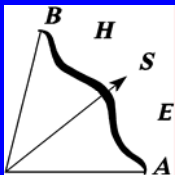


Significant risk?

HSE guide - the risk is significant if it is:

- Not obvious
- Unusual
- Difficult to manage

Therefore, is this a significant risk?



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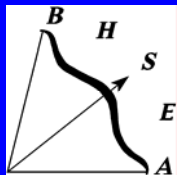
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What standards do you want?

When assessing a company's standards do you want –

- Legal compliance?
- Good practice?
- Best practice?



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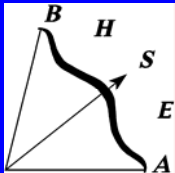
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What standards do you want?

When assessing an individual's competence?

- Do I need a professional qualified person?
- What have they done?
- How are they keeping up to date?
- What attitude do they have?
- Can you discern a reflective competence?



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Conclusion

- Competence is a blend of abilities which can be gained and lost
- Do not measure competence in cm (thickness of the assessment questionnaires)
- Use your judgement

