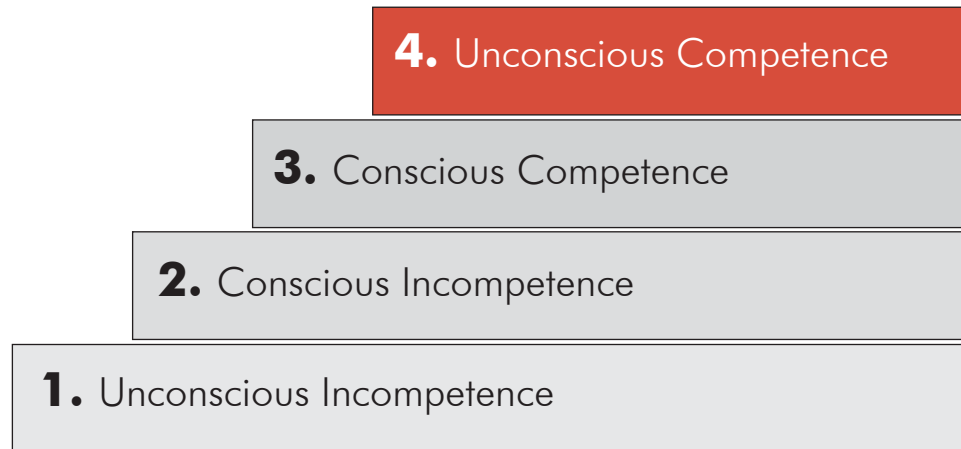


# Acquiring Intercultural Competence



1. Step One, **unconscious incompetence**, refers to a lack of awareness of your own culture and a lack of understanding of the different, yet equally valid, ways in which others may interact and see the world.
2. Once there is an awareness of the differences and a sense of how culture shapes and influences our way of seeing and interacting in the world, then there is a movement to the second step of being **consciously** aware of your **"incompetence."**
3. Many intercultural communication courses bring people to this awareness and then give them tools to gradually develop the **conscious competence** of the third stage. Developing this competence, however, takes time and continuous reflection to learn from intercultural experiences and misunderstandings.
4. The final stage in the development of intercultural competence essentially means having the ease and comfort in other cultures that you have in your own. One could say that we are all **unconsciously competent** in our own culture in that we do not think consciously of our interactions each time we act.

(Karen Rolston, 2006 - Centre for Intercultural Communications, UBC)