

Dunning Kruger Effect

In a study published in *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Cornell psychologists David Dunning and Justin Kruger discussed the concept of people not being able to recognize their own in competencies and how that creates unrealistic or inflated self-assessments. In other words people overestimate what they know about things (or underestimate what they don't know).

The **Dunning–Kruger effect** is a cognitive bias in which low-ability individuals suffer from illusory superiority, mistakenly assessing their ability as much higher than it really is. Dunning and Kruger attributed this bias to a metacognitive inability of those of low ability to recognize their ineptitude and evaluate their ability accurately. Their research also suggests corollaries: high-ability individuals may underestimate their relative competence and may erroneously assume that tasks which are easy for them are also easy for others.^[1]

Dunning and Kruger have postulated that the effect is the result of internal illusion in those of low ability, and external misperception in those of high ability: "The miscalibration of the incompetent stems from an error about

People tend to hold overly favorable views of their abilities in many social and intellectual domains. The authors suggest that this overestimation occurs, in part, because people who are unskilled in these domains suffer a dual burden: Not only do these people reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but their incompetence robs them of the metacognitive ability to realize it. Across 4 studies, the authors found that participants scoring in the bottom quartile on tests of humor, grammar, and logic grossly overestimated their test performance and ability. Although their test scores put them in the 12th percentile, they estimated themselves to be in the 62nd. Several analyses linked this miscalibration to deficits in metacognitive skill, or the capacity to distinguish accuracy from error. Paradoxically, improving the skills of the participants, and thus increasing their metacognitive competence, helped them recognize the limitations of their abilities.