



# The Peter Principle

*Cathryn Baker*

[www.ThinkAvanzara.com](http://www.ThinkAvanzara.com)

## The Peter Principle

In 1969 Dr. Laurence J. Peter introduced the Peter Principle, a concept that suggested employees tend to be promoted based on their competence in their current role, rather than their abilities relevant to the intended role. We are all familiar with it and have likely witnessed unfortunate consequences for both the employee and the organization.

**The Peter Principle states that an employee continues to receive promotions to work in higher ranks up to that point where they reach a level of incompetence. In simple terms, the higher up the hierarchy ladder an individual goes, the more likely they are to fail in their new position.**

The Peter Principle often occurs in technical industries, and I also saw this during my staffing career with my manufacturing and logistics clients. How to avoid the inevitable fallout when promoting your employees into management positions?

- Design objective performance metrics and clear success criteria for all roles in your organization
- Implement a system of regular feedback, mentoring, and support for the employees you DO promote to management positions
- Use competency-based assessments to identify individuals who may be good candidates for future leadership roles
- Train, develop, and invest in your employees! They are your most precious assets