

# Getting a Handle on Performance: The Performance Model

The Theory of Performance (*Faculty Guidebook* 1.2.1) allows us to dissect a performance. Through this lens, we see that a performance is comprised of the following dimensions: identity, skills, knowledge, context, personal factors, and fixed factors. A performer has some control over all of these, with the exception of fixed factors.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{IDENTITY} \\ \text{SKILLS} \\ \text{KNOWLEDGE} \\ \text{CONTEXT} \\ \text{PERSONAL FACTORS} \\ + \text{FIXED FACTORS} \\ \hline = \text{PERFORMANCE} \end{array}$$

<b>Identity</b>	As individuals mature in a discipline, they take on the shared identity of the professional community while elevating their own uniqueness. For a learner to perform well, he or she must have a strong identity as a member of a learning community. A student demonstrates identity as a learner when engaging in learning activities, such as attending classes and studying. A student who is majoring in psychology begins to demonstrate identity within that field by using the terminology of psychology.
<b>Skills</b>	Skills describe specific actions that are used by individuals, groups, or organizations in multiple types of performances. Within education, the focus is on those skills that are transferable across contexts and allow individuals to improve their mastery of subject matter. These are known as <i>learning skills</i> . Learners who perform well work to increase their mastery of learning skills.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Knowledge involves facts, information, concepts, theories, or principles acquired by a person or group through experience or education. You are learning about the Performance Model right now and are adding to your knowledge with every word you read.
<b>Context</b>	This component includes variables associated with the situation in which the individual or organization performs. Each time you perform as a learner, you do so within a specific context, which includes a number of variables. For example, your performance in this institute has, as its context, the way you meet (in a classroom? online?), how long you meet as a group, and so on.
<b>Personal Factors</b>	This component includes variables associated with the personal situation of an individual. Your performance as an educator depends a great deal upon your personal factors and the life situation you are in. Personal factors can present a significant challenge to performing well.
<b>Fixed Factors</b>	This component includes variables unique to an individual that cannot be altered. These are the only aspect of performance that cannot be altered and include items such as the first language you learned, color-blindness, etc. While your performance as a learner is certainly affected by fixed factors, it is a mistake to automatically assume that your performance is constrained by these factors.