

Truss Leveling

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About

To inform these levels in our original hiring decisions at Truss, we referred to the [Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition](#). This is an extension of that model.

Levels are cumulative. In order for an individual to reside at a given level, they should generally practice all capabilities of the given level consistently as well as all of the skills in the previous levels. Promotion to the next level will be considered when all capabilities in the next level are consistently demonstrated. In addition to technical skills, all employees are expected to demonstrate the core values of Truss.

"Below Expectations" outlines what someone might look like for someone new in their role or is struggling in their role, and should be in communication with their manager for corrective actions.

"Above Expectations" illustrates someone excelling in their role, and would have grounds to be compensated more highly in their pay band or could be a potential candidate for promotion.

An employee at Truss may have a mix of skills across the different categories. When placing someone at a level, we will generally round-down rather than round-up. It's better to be in solid good standing at

a certain level and move up than to be on rocky ground at a level on which you aren't quite performing up to par. We would prefer to re-evaluate and promote than demote and to know that each employee is recognized at the most accurate level for their unique skills and contributions.

This matrix is in the general format of a career ladder but is not meant to be one-way. Through the life cycle of an employee at Truss there may be opportunities for lateral moves in addition to promotional opportunities. There will be room for growth, development, recognition, and rich career opportunities at different levels as we grow as a company,

Biz Ops or Delivery Management

Level	Below Expectations	Expected Technical, Execution, Collaboration/Communication, Influence & Professionalism skills	Above Expectations
1 - Novice generally 0-1 year of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete tasks as defined * Fails to communicate roadblocks in a timely fashion * Repeatedly makes the same mistakes after correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes tasks defined by supervisory personnel * Adjusts time expenditure and focus as directed by supervisor * Seeks guidance on what skills to improve and how to go about improving them * Learns tools and resources * Attempts to characterize and resolve roadblocks through 5-15 min Google searching before reporting * Reports roadblocks quickly if not answered by the internet and asks for guidance * If a mistake is made, takes note and tries to avoid that mistake in the future and graciously accepts feedback * Represents their team well to others in the company * Actively seeks to develop & learn time/task management processes * Reports on their work via Pivotal * Arrives, leaves, and documents hours accurately without prompting * Demonstrates integrity with confidential information (e.g. salary, passwords) * Learns and embodies the Truss core values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Anticipates when a task could use more clarification and asks for it prior to starting a task * Identifies ways to improve processes that are in place and recommends those to supervisor

2 - Advanced Beginner--add years of experience here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete assigned tasks * Fails to communicate task status *Inability to work on simple tasks without a high level of support from manager or teammates 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Starts and finishes tasks on time to expected standard * If a task definition has ambiguity, asks appropriate questions to resolve that ambiguity * Begins executing tasks with less definition and guidance * Identifies areas to improve skills, hypothesizes how to improve them, and discusses with senior staff * Identifies problems in the process of executing a task and engages with manager to solve problems * Begins facilitating company collaboration and events * Takes ownership of and can work somewhat autonomously * Seeks feedback for improvement as well as accepting it graciously * Comfortable raising issues in team meetings and 1:1's * Builds trust with teammates and assumes good intent and openly demonstrates being a team player 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identifying areas of company improvement outside core responsibilities
3 - Competently--add years of experience here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Consistently requires intervention to keep delegated projects on track * Fails to identify existential risks to the company's operation within area of responsibility * May not exhibit 3 or more of the company core values 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Can define multiple tasks within a project and manage multiple projects at once * Reviews work weekly and sets priorities for review by manager * Consistently able to take on administrative tasks on behalf of their manager with confidence that task will be executed correctly * Begins to interact with outside vendors and clients on well-defined administrative tasks * Identifies problems, proposes solutions, prioritizes best solution with feedback from manager * Begins to assume leadership and responsibility for ongoing administrative projects (e.g A/P) * Documents and improves existing company processes * May be involved in hiring process and is comfortable giving objective feedback on candidates * Nimble, ability to change direction quickly based on shifting company needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Improves existing administrative processes for significant time/cost savings *Frequently demonstrates many of the company core values

4 - Proficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to anticipate negative outcomes of business choices * Fails to dynamically adjust project approach in the face of changing circumstances * Does not demonstrate Truss core values at an acceptable level 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Evaluates scope, dependencies, pitfalls, benefits of complex projects * Prepares weekly work, sets goals, constraints and reviews with manager * Demonstrates ability to manage outside vendors and clients, with oversight from manager * Can be depended upon to take initiative to identify problems, propose solutions, prioritize best solution * Mastering the ability to express complicated issues simply * Actively managing one or more internal projects, in consultation with execs * Utilizes project brief format (examples: project design doc, 401k evaluation doc) to review with manager * Alerting manager of potential business opportunities that align with the company's goals * Aware of potential staffing deficiencies and alerts manager accordingly * Defines staffing requirements for new projects and client engagements * Can advocate for team resources * Is seen as a mentor and motivator of team's performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Demonstrates understanding & capacity to aid in growing the company's business * Frequently demonstrates most of the company core values
5 - Expert--add years of experience here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to maintain profitable client & vendor relationships * Fails to consistently identify opportunities for future business or optimizations * Routinely does not demonstrate the Truss core values 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Initiates projects, with tasks, goals, budget and deadline as appropriate. * Manages and trains staff to develop autonomy * Manages outside vendor and client relationships, contributes to strategy for making sure those relationships are successful * Identifies, evaluates, and pursues business opportunities that align with the company's goals * Identifies strategic company objectives * Defines and puts in place company structures/mechanisms to ensure strategic objectives are met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develops new lines of business in line with the company's goals * Frequently demonstrates many of the company core values

Engineering

Level	Below Expectations	Expectations	Above Expectations
<p>1 - Novice</p> <p>Summary - Is not yet ready to undertake work for a client. Should pass through this level quickly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete tasks as defined * Fails to communicate roadblocks in a timely fashion * Repeatedly makes the same mistakes after correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes tasks defined by supervisory personnel * Adjusts time expenditure and focus as directed by supervisor * Seeks guidance on what skills to improve and how to go about improving them * Attempts to characterize and resolve roadblocks through 5-15 min Google searching before reporting * Reports roadblocks quickly if not answered by the internet and asks for guidance * If a mistake is made, takes note and tries to avoid that mistake in the future * Actively seeks to develop & learn time/task management processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Anticipates when a task could use more clarification and asks for it prior to starting a task * Identifies ways to improve processes that are in place and recommends those to supervisor
<p>2 - Advanced Beginner</p> <p>Summary - able to work as a junior engineer on a client team with more or less help from senior Trussel on team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete assigned tasks * Fails to communicate task status * Fails to work effectively as part of a team 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes technical tasks in existing areas of expertise with some guidance * Breaks moderately-sized tasks down into smaller units of work upon request and reviews break-down with senior engineers * When encountering a new problem space, develops an idea of what there is to learn and where to start based on consultation with experts * Seeks to understand and employ collaboration practices including, but not limited to: working in sprints, collaborative git workflows, listening well in conversation, attempting to come up with hypotheses for how problems might be solved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins facilitating team collaboration * Begins independently discovering and solving technical / process problems

<p>3 - Competent</p> <p>Summary - Able to work entirely solo at a client from project inception within current areas of expertise (relying on Trussel support via slack). As part of a larger client team can run sub-projects, coordinating the work of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to initiate actions required for project success independently on medium sized projects * Fails to provide guidance to junior engineers 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins helping junior engineers * Executes technical tasks in existing areas of expertise with little to no guidance * Formulates plans of attack for moderate to large-sized tasks * Helps other engineers break down work into smaller chunks and helps them to define order of execution * When encountering new tech, performs independent research to understand the problem space and confirms chosen direction in consultation with experts * Looks for areas of risk in a project and brings them to attention of project leads * Can facilitate previously defined team collaboration practices such as sprint planning * Independently develops strong hypotheses for solutions to problems in their areas of expertise * Can research areas of technology adjacent to existing areas of expertise and self-teach the basics * Identifies when problems are beyond their ability to efficiently learn on their own and asks for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Independently starts development of junior engineers * Demonstrates capacity to successfully lead significant client projects from start to finish
<p>4 - Proficient</p> <p>Summary - Can run small to medium size client teams within area of expertise. Can drop into client solo in other areas or as a part of a broader team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to successfully lead significantly sized projects independently * Fails to adapt to new technologies as appropriate 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trains junior engineers on how to become a better engineer and helps them self-evaluate and plan progress * Can be depended upon to resolve complex technical problems consistently * Is familiar with canonical software development patterns and employs them appropriately * Is familiar with multiple platforms and development tools and chooses the appropriate technologies for the problem * Has experience setting up projects from scratch and managing infrastructure on which code will be run * Can easily move between familiar and unfamiliar areas of expertise and self-teach with little to no direction * Identifies, researches, and evaluates new technologies * Breaks down and leads projects with minimal to no direction and helps others to break tasks down further to appropriate granularity for that individual * Helps define the team goals, projects, and milestones * Takes the initiative to employ and lead effective team collaboration practices * Takes the initiative to employ and lead effective client engagement practices [e.g. bootstrapping clients doc] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Demonstrates capacity to independently manage client relationships * Demonstrates capacity to manage teams of engineers to complete large projects

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Identifies and recommends ways for existing processes to be improved * Sets client expectations appropriately * Delivers projects to meet agreed objectives * Takes initiative to resolve interpersonal conflicts on the team 	
<p>5 - Expert</p> <p>Summary - Can run several projects concurrently and/or jump into new areas and pick up expertise while adding value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to maintain positive client relationships * Fails to adapt project plan to changing circumstances 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <p>-Engineering-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trains other engineers on how to become better engineering leaders * Helps define and refine team collaboration practices * Regularly identifies and prioritizes engineering problems in previously undefined problem spaces * Finds and suggests new practices and technologies to use on a given project * Identifies previously unconsidered classes of solutions to problems * Evaluates trade-offs between an arbitrary number of potential engineering solutions and makes recommendations for which solution(s) to pursue, how, and why * Maintains awareness of industry practices and technologies * Leads/facilitates decision-making processes both at client and at Truss <p>-Business-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Helps improve client engagement practices * Identifies patterns of risks and anticipates problems in client engagements (e.g. Truss Bootstrapping Document) * Identifies opportunities for new/expanded contracts * Reports tactical and strategic information to the client engagement lead * Can step into client engagement lead role ad hoc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develops new products / business opportunities * Establishes identity as leader in industry

Design

Level	Below Expectations	Expectations	Above Expectations
1 - Novice Summary - Is not yet ready to undertake work for a client. Should pass through this level quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete tasks as defined * Fails to communicate roadblocks in a timely fashion * Repeatedly makes the same mistakes after correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes tasks defined by supervisory personnel * Adjusts time expenditure and focus as directed by supervisor * Seeks guidance on what skills to improve and how to go about improving them * Attempts to characterize and resolve roadblocks through 5-15 min Google searching before reporting * Reports roadblocks quickly if not answered by the internet and asks for guidance * If a mistake is made, takes note and tries to avoid that mistake in the future * Actively seeks to develop & learn time/task management processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Anticipates when a task could use more clarification and asks for it prior to starting a task * Identifies ways to improve processes that are in place and recommends those to supervisor
2 - Advanced Beginner Summary - able to work as a junior designer on a client team with more or less help from senior Trussel on team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete assigned tasks * Fails to communicate task status * Fails to work effectively as part of a team 	[All of the above, plus...] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes research/design tasks in existing areas of expertise with some guidance * Breaks moderately-sized tasks down into smaller units of work upon request and reviews break-down with senior designers * When encountering a new problem space, develops an idea of what there is to learn and where to start based on consultation with experts * Seeks to understand and employ collaboration practices including, but not limited to: working in sprints, participation in design critique and research synthesis, listening well in conversation, attempting to come up with hypotheses for how problems might be solved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins facilitating team collaboration * Begins independently discovering and solving research-design / process problems

<p>3 - Competent</p> <p>Summary - Able to work entirely solo at a client from project inception within current areas of expertise (relying on Trussel support via slack). As part of a larger client team can run sub-projects, co-ordinating the work of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to initiate actions required for project success independently on medium sized projects * Fails to provide guidance to junior designers 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins helping junior designers * Executes design/research tasks in existing areas of expertise with little to no guidance * Formulates plans of attack for moderate to large-sized tasks * Helps other designers break down work into useful chunks and helps them to define order of execution * Has experience planning and executing user research * Has experience in creating artifacts used to generate user experience design or content strategy. * Has experience working with and contributing to design systems * When encountering new and complex problem spaces, performs independent research to understand the problem space and confirms chosen direction in consultation with experts * Looks for areas of risk in a project and brings them to attention of project leads * Can facilitate previously defined team collaboration practices such as sprint planning, research synthesis, design critique * Independently develops strong hypotheses for solutions to problems in their areas of expertise * Can research areas of research/design adjacent to existing areas of expertise and self-teach the basics * Identifies when problems are beyond their ability to efficiently learn on their own and asks for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Independently starts development of junior designers * Demonstrates capacity to successfully lead significant research and design projects from start to finish
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<p>4 - Proficient</p> <p>Summary - Can run small to medium size client teams within area of expertise. Can drop into client solo in other areas or as a part of a broader team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to successfully lead significantly sized projects independently * Fails to adapt to new methods as appropriate 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trains junior researchers/designers on how to improve and helps them self-evaluate and plan progress * Can be depended upon to resolve complex research/design problems consistently * Is familiar with canonical research and design methods and employs them appropriately * Has more experience planning and executing user research * Has expertise in creating artifacts used to generate user experience design or content strategy. * Has more experience working with and contributing to design systems * Can easily move between familiar and unfamiliar areas of expertise and self-teach with little to no direction * Identifies, researches, and evaluates new methods of research/design * Breaks down and leads projects with minimal to no direction and helps others to break tasks down further to appropriate granularity for that individual * Helps define the team goals, projects, and milestones * Takes the initiative to employ and lead effective team collaboration practices * Takes the initiative to employ and lead effective client engagement practices [e.g. bootstrapping clients doc] * Identifies and recommends ways for existing processes to be improved * Sets client expectations appropriately * Delivers projects to meet agreed objectives * Takes initiative to resolve interpersonal conflicts on the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Demonstrates capacity to independently manage client relationships * Demonstrates capacity to manage teams of designers to complete large projects
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5 - Expert Summary - Can run several projects concurrently and/or jump into new areas and pick up expertise while adding value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to maintain positive client relationships * Fails to adapt project plan to changing circumstances 	[All of the above, plus...] -Research/Design- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trains other designers on how to become better design leaders * Helps define and refine team collaboration practices * Regularly identifies and prioritizes research/design problems in previously undefined problem spaces * Finds and suggests new practices and methodologies to use on a given project * Evaluates trade-offs between an arbitrary number of potential design solutions and makes recommendations for which solution(s) to pursue, how, and why * Maintains awareness of industry practices and technologies * Leads/facilitates decision-making processes both at client and at Truss -Business- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Helps improve client engagement practices * Identifies patterns of risks and anticipates problems in client engagements (e.g. Truss Bootstrapping Document) * Identifies opportunities for new/expanded contracts * Reports tactical and strategic information to the client engagement lead * Can step into client engagement lead role ad hoc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develops new products / business opportunities * Establishes identity as leader in industry
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Product

Level	Below Expectations	Expectations	Above Expectations
1 - Novice Summary - Is not yet ready to undertake work for a client. Should pass through this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete tasks as defined * Fails to communicate roadblocks in a timely fashion * Repeatedly makes the same mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes tasks defined by supervisory personnel * Adjusts time expenditure and focus as directed by supervisor * Seeks guidance on what skills to improve and how to go about improving them * Attempts to characterize and resolve roadblocks through 5-15 min Google searching before reporting * Reports roadblocks quickly if not answered by the internet and asks for guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Anticipates when a task could use more clarification and asks for it prior to starting a task * Identifies ways to improve processes that are in place and recommends those to supervisor

level quickly.	after correction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * If a mistake is made, takes note and tries to avoid that mistake in the future * Actively seeks to develop & learn time/task management processes 	
2 - Advanced Beginner Summary - able to work as a junior product manager on a client team with more or less help from senior product manager on team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to complete assigned tasks * Fails to communicate task status * Fails to work effectively as part of a team 	[All of the above, plus...] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Completes product management tasks in existing area of expertise with some guidance from management * Works with designers and supervisor to properly scope work to clearly defined and measurable outcomes * Works with supervisor to ensure that outcomes are tracking with the highest priority product goals * Works with supervisor, and delivery teams to define and organize product priorities for each sprint * Seeks to understand and employ collaboration practices including, but not limited to: working in sprints, participation in design critique and research synthesis, listening well in conversation, attempting to come up with hypotheses for how problems might be solved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins facilitating team collaboration * Begins independently discovering and solving product issues
3 - Competent Summary - Able to work entirely solo at a client from project inception within current areas of expertise (relying on Trussel support via slack). As part of a larger client team can run sub-projects, co-ordinating the work of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to initiate actions required for project success independently on medium sized projects * Fails to provide guidance to junior product managers * Fails to deliver according to overall business or product goals 	[All of the above, plus...] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begins helping junior product managers * Works with business stakeholders to research market and determine product vision and product market fit * Experience working with designers and stakeholders to create user centric product roadmaps * Independently creates hypothesis driven and well-scoped epics that map to product priorities with little or no supervision * Guides engineering team on feature development with little to no supervision * When encountering new and complex problem spaces, performs independent research to understand the problem space and confirms chosen direction in consultation with experts * Understands how to measure the right things in order to gauge progress * Makes product decisions based on these measurements * Looks for areas of product risk and brings them to attention of lead product manager * Can facilitate previously defined team collaboration practices such as sprint planning, refinement, product increment definition meetings and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Independently starts development of junior product managers * Demonstrates capacity to successfully lead product development efforts through multiple stages of the product life cycle

		retros * Identifies when problems are beyond their ability to efficiently learn on their own and asks for help	
4 - Proficient Summary - Can run small to medium size client teams within area of expertise. Can drop into client solo in other areas or as a part of a broader team.	* Fails to successfully lead significantly sized projects independently * Fails to adapt to new methods as appropriate * Fails to contribute substantially to the product management practice at Truss * Fails to build sustainable products that can be handed off to clients to manage	[All of the above, plus...] * Can be depended upon to manage stakeholder relationships independently * Can guide a design and research team independently * Understands enough about related fields of engineering and design and can integrate those priorities into the product roadmap * Understands different kinds of product metrics and how to incorporate them into a product development roadmap * Can easily move between familiar and unfamiliar areas of expertise and self-teach with little to no direction * Identifies, researches, and evaluates new methods of product management * Understands a variety of different product management systems (scrum, waterfall, lean, SAFe, etc) and can adapt process to fit different situations * Helps define product management practice at Truss and implements consistently across multiple projects * Serves as lead product manager on complex products involving multiple value streams and product managers * Takes initiative to resolve interpersonal conflicts on the team * Coaches clients on product management best practices	* Demonstrates capacity to independently manage client relationships * Demonstrates capacity to manage large cross-functional teams of designers and developers to deliver quality results in complex situations (products with multiple workstreams and dependencies, new or complex markets)

<p>5 - Expert</p> <p>Summary - Can run several projects concurrently and/or jump into new areas and pick up expertise while adding value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fails to maintain positive client relationships * Fails to adapt product roadmap to changing circumstances * Fails to contribute to business goals * Fails to provide leadership and direction to product team and the rest of the org 	<p>[All of the above, plus...]</p> <p>-Product management-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Has experience supervising product management teams * Has experience establishing product management best practices at an organization * Has experience evangelizing product management best practices at conferences and industry events * Has experience leading communications strategies to support product goals * Maintains awareness of industry practices and technologies across private sector and government * Leads strategic initiatives to define markets and product market fit <p>-Business-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Experience leading a product portfolio including a P&L * Can sell products and services and shape client engagements * Has demonstrated experience creating products for new markets * Is able to help define product/market opportunities for Truss * Is able to identify opportunities to scale business development efforts to match market opportunity * Reports tactical and strategic information to the client engagement lead * Can step into client engagement lead role ad hoc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develops new products / business opportunities * Establishes identity as leader in industry
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