OSI Layers
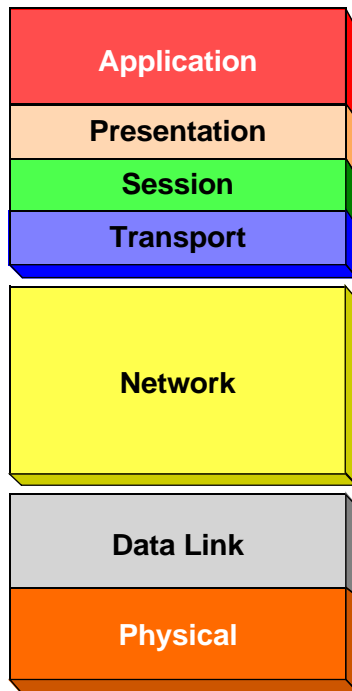
The Layered Model

To understand the SS7 protocol, it is helpful to understand the concept of protocol layering. By 1983 some of the major Telecom companies had begun to realize the numerous problems that were developing because computers of numerous types were attempting to communicate with each other over network connections. They decided to sit down and create some specific interfaces that could be used by all.

In the process, they quickly became aware that by creating specific interfaces they might be slowing the development and implementation of future standards and future computer technologies. So, instead of creating specific interfaces, they decided to create a model of a layered architecture which could be used to develop future networks. The result became the Open Systems Interconnection (**OSI**) model later adopted by the International Standards Organization (**ISO**).

A layered protocol consists of modular programs, each designed to perform certain groups of functions, and each designed to be able to offer its functionalities to other modules. Thus, each module became a "part" of the whole protocol architecture, and each part which offers functional services to another part became a "user part".