

**Developmental Staging in the Learning Process**  
Six Developmental Stages Towards Expertise and Mastery

**NOVICE:**

- Not familiar with terminology or procedures
- May be familiar with similar skills or technologies.

**ADVANCED BEGINNER:**

- Is familiar with some procedures and techniques
- Can sometimes do simple tasks but unpredictably
- Does not understand the methods involved
- No useful work is done.

**COMPETENT:**

- Conversant in terminology
- Can effectively use basic techniques and procedures
- Beginning to understand some methods but not the methodology
- Executes simple tasks with confidence but unevenly
- 'Automatic' skills emerging
- Breakeven point between accomplishments and mistakes.

**PROFICIENT:**

- Productive
- Fluent in job terminology
- Executes many techniques and procedures with automaticity
- Understands and observes methodology
- Can describe how work is done and how decisions are made
- Works independently and knows personal limitations up to a point
- Biggest risks result from 'blind spot effect' and unexpected difficulties
- May tutor Novices & Beginners effectively.

**EXPERT:**

- Highly productive due to experience and automaticity
- Excellent estimating and predictive abilities
- Reliable application of knowledge and skills
- Knows what to do and what NOT to do
- Excellent understanding of methodology
- May coach high ability students.

**MASTER:**

- High degree of expertise and recognition for accomplishments
- May teach 'Experts' and mentor other Masters- in -training
- Invents new concepts/products/solutions within discipline
- Extends the discipline and has inter-disciplinary capabilities.