

## FOUR STAGES OF LEARNING – PROJECT REBOOT

A reset on a construction team relationship is more than a conversation — it's a relearning process. Noel Burch identified the four stages of competence in the 1970's to map the four stages people go through when learning something new. Learning is experimental and experience-based trial and error. Information can be accumulated, but until it is practiced and used, can it be considered learning or a skill; without practice it is only information.



1. We have no idea how far off we were

**UNCONSCIOUS  
INCOMPETENCE**

**Before reset:** team normalized friction — missed handoffs, poor communication or siloed decision-making.

**On jobsite:** Crews think delays or tension are "just how it goes."

**Reset move:** Surface issues fast — use candid partnering sessions and conversations, bring specific breakdowns into the open and align on what good should look like



2. We see the gaps now

**CONSCIOUS  
INCOMPETENCE**

**Reset:** it becomes real — and uncomfortable

**On jobsite:** team identifies unclear plans, admit coordination gaps, push back on late information

**Reset move:** Lean into it. Define clear expectations such as who communicates what, when and how. Establish simple, visible processes (daily huddles, escalation paths)



3. We're doing it right — on purpose!

**CONSCIOUS  
COMPETENCE**

**Reset:** Team starts executing differently — it takes effort and intention. They recognize misalignment, trust gaps and communication failures.

**On jobsite:** Daily coordination actually happens, issues get raised early instead of buried, commitments get tracked and honored

**Reset move:** Reinforce discipline. Use Checklists, structured meeting and accountability loops. Celebrate small wins to build momentum



4. This is just how we work now

**UNCONSCIOUS  
COMPETENCE**

**Reset:** The new behaviors become the culture. Trust builds because performance becomes consistent.

**On jobsite:** Team anticipates each other's needs, communication is proactive (vs reactive) and problems get solved before the escalate

**Reset move:** Protect it. Capture lessons learned, onboard new team members intentionally and keep feedback loops alive to keep the team from drifting backward

**The bottom line:** A reset advances through awareness, *discomfort*, discipline and habit — a team must stay committed through the hard middle (stages 2 and 3) to lock in lasting performance.