

# Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>Acknowledgments</b>                                 | 4   |
| <b>Preface</b>   | 5   |
| <b>The Explorer Stage</b>                              | 12  |
| <b>Chapter 1</b> – Introduction to Becoming an Expert  | 13  |
| <b>Chapter 2</b> – Probes: May the Force be Within You | 25  |
| <b>The Specialist Stage</b>                            | 55  |
| <b>Chapter 3</b> – Choosing a Field                    | 57  |
| <b>Chapter 4</b> – Launching a Project                 | 81  |
| <b>The Expert Stage</b>                                | 122 |
| <b>Chapter 5</b> – Becoming an Expert                  | 123 |
| <b>Bibliography</b>                                    | 134 |

# Preface

## Helpful Hints for Experts-to-be and for Their Helpers

### Dear Aspiring Expert;

Before you begin this book, I want to assure you that every human being can become an expert in a field of his or her own choice. Those who want to be singers, of course, can't all be Elvis or Madonna; aspiring tennis stars can't all be Stefan Edberg or Steffi Graf, but all of us *can* become very good at what we decide to do. Becoming expert simply means becoming a lot better at something than we are now.

There are a lot of good reasons for becoming really skilled in a field. To be honest, the most important is that people who can't do anything at all well are kind of pathetic. It's like knowing what Stefan Edberg could be, but watching him instead sit around watching TV, smoking cigarettes, hanging around and letting that wonderful potential in him for flight gradually die out until he is grounded for life. When any of us are too lazy or spaced out to make something of our talents, we are sad and pathetic. But if we make the most of what we've got, we shine, and there are some great bonus benefits as well.

When we begin to set goals and make plans, we learn to take control of our lives and to influence our futures rather than to be helpless victims of whatever happens to us. We also enter a special house of joy that is open only to those who have worked to enter it. We learn to serve an unbelievable ace, to play and sing our own music, or to design and build a beautiful structure. We suddenly do things that we couldn't do until we earned entrance to that special room where things happen, the place pathetic people never experience. The world needs and wants men and women who can make a contribution and get things done, so by becoming expert in any field now, you are also preparing to be successful as an adult. And your skill will always be there to call on when you need it, and no one will ever be able to take it from you for the rest of your life.

But one caution: if this were easy, everyone would already be experts. In fact, it is a lot *easier* to watch TV, hang around, talk on the telephone, play computer games, and all those delicious things. They take little effort, strategy, or sacrifice, while becoming expert does. Strange as it seems, a lot of people have a hard time doing what they want to do. So if all this is new to you, be ready first for some changes and some struggles, and *then* be ready to feel the power and pleasure of achievement.

You will struggle less if you choose to become expert in an activity that really matters to you. Our experience with hundreds of people is that those who do what they think they *should* do have a much harder time than those who do what they really *want* to do. When the crunch comes, you have to really want success for yourself, not for your parents, teachers or friends. So listen to everyone but decide for yourself. Your first task in taking control may be to convince others to support the choices you make.

As you take charge and become skilled, you will be very proud of your success, and your family and friends will be very impressed with your achievement. I wish I could be there to see it and share it. I won't wish you good luck because luck has little to do with it, but I do wish that you will soon feel your power.

# The Expert's Program

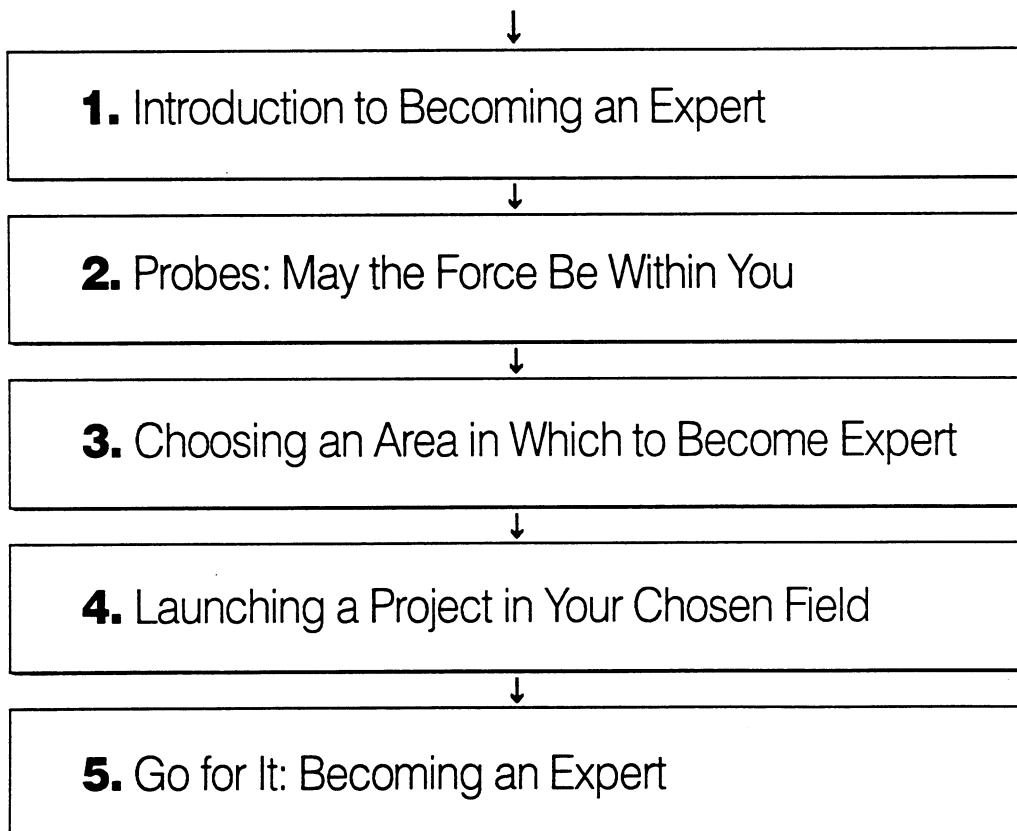
The Expert's Program has three stages:



You will go through *The Explorer Stage* in Chapters 1 and 2

You will go through *The Specialist Stage* in Chapters 3 and 4

You will be invited to follow *The Path of the Expert* in Chapter 5



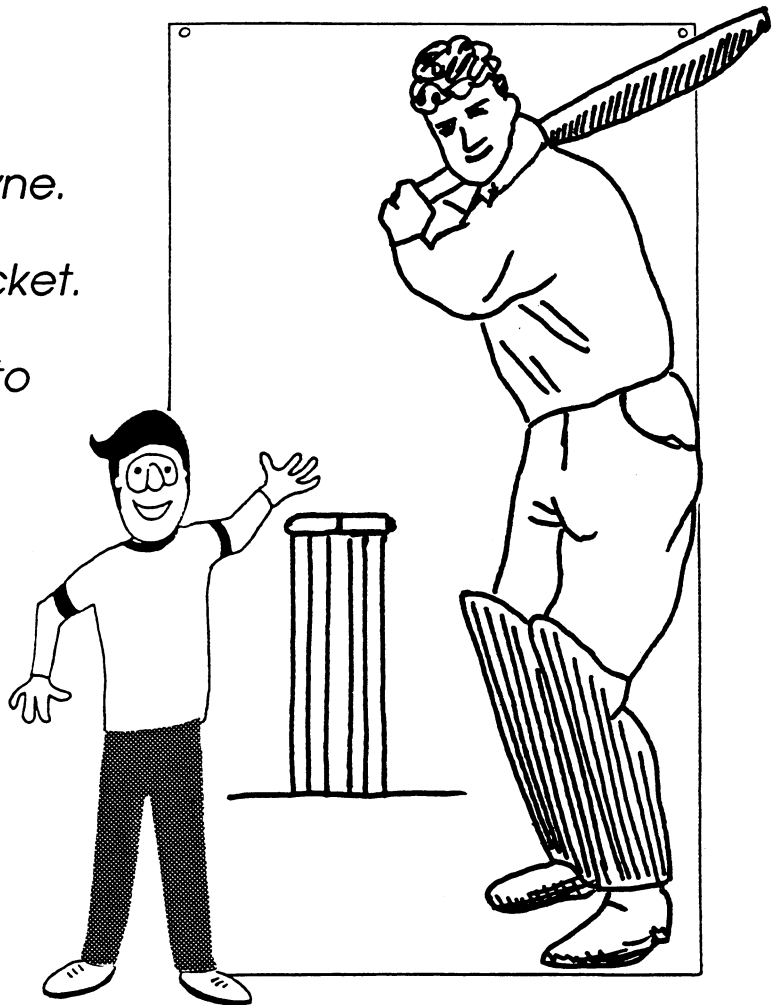
## **Know Something about Everything AND Everything about Something**

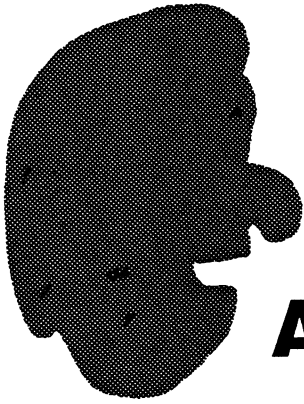
In school you are usually taught something about many different subjects. In this program the goal is to learn a great deal about one field of activity... how to become an expert.

## **Learn What Others Tell You Is Important AND Learn What You Decide Is Important**

In school you are usually told what to learn and how to learn it. In this program you will decide what activity to become expert in and how to go about it.

*"This is my friend Wayne.  
He's an expert at cricket.  
What are you going to  
be expert in?"*





## A. “What is an expert?”

An expert in any field of activity is someone who...

- **Knows** a lot about it and keeps up with new developments.
- **Performs** skilfully in it.
- Can **apply** this knowledge and skill to real situations.
- Can **teach** it to others.
- Regularly **launches challenging activities** that demand a new level of performance.

...becoming expert means becoming  
very good at something...

## Here's an example.

Michelle became an expert in computers...



- She learned a lot about different computers, what they can do, and how they work. She keeps up with new developments by reading magazines about computers and regularly visiting a shop that sells them.
- She has become skilful at programming a computer and regularly improves her skill through practise.
- Michelle developed a program for her mother to keep the family accounts.
- She is teaching three friends how to make programs to teach themselves maths skills. She gives talks to the class on “What’s New in Computers.”
- Michelle’s challenges include building a simple computer and getting a part-time job working with computers.