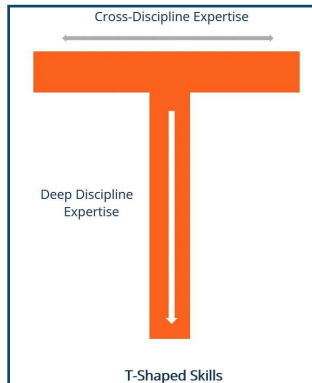


# What's Next?

## How to Advance in Your Journey

In the modern workplace, ways of thinking and working are constantly emerging and evolving. Keeping up can be tough. IT professionals must make a concerted effort to stay current by broadening *and* deepening their skills.



This is best illustrated in the concept of T-shaped people introduced by IDEO CEO Tim Brown. T-shaped people have broad skills across multiple fields of knowledge or discipline (the horizontal part of the T), but also deep expertise in one particular specialty or domain (the vertical piece).

Individuals that commit to lifelong learning eventually develop capabilities outside of their specific domain of expertise. When this happens, they develop depth in other areas or disciplines, which means they begin to resemble the symbol pi ( $\pi$ ), and eventually an M or comb. Other skill shapes that enable success in the modern enterprise include X-shaped and E-shaped people). **What employee shape are you?**

While it is tempting to specialize vertically (i.e., to be I-shaped), companies have found that when individuals lack an understanding of each other's disciplines, it is difficult for them to collaborate.

Collaboration improves when individuals expand their horizontal, cross-discipline knowledge and skills.

### How to Advance in Your Journey

A career journey can be thought of as moving along a path or climbing a ladder. Each step enables you to learn new skills and gain valuable experience. Lifelong learning is an essential element that lets you focus on what you're passionate about and what you envision for your future. It also helps you to both succeed in your current role, and position yourself for the next step on your journey.

Becoming a T-shaped or M-shaped professional does not require that you fully master all new areas of skill and knowledge. Simply moving to the first stage, awareness, provides benefits to both you as an individual and to your organization as you are better able to collaborate and contribute to the attainment of the organization's goals. Your progression will depend on your role and responsibilities.

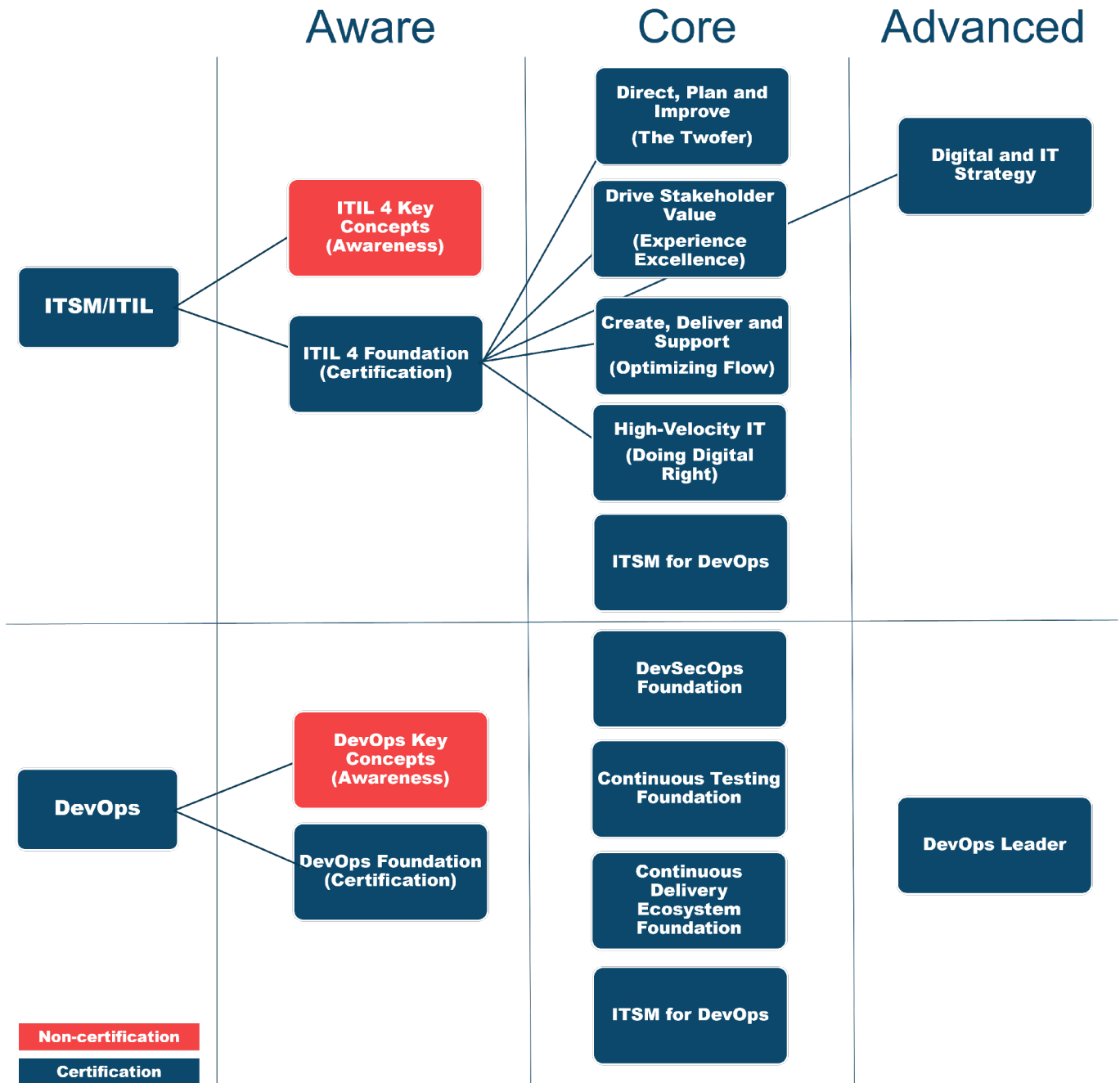
Learners unaware of a concept advance through levels of knowledge and skills as needed:

- **Aware** – Understands the concept and why it is important
- **Core** – Can use the concept as needed in the performance of a given role and set of responsibilities
- **Advanced** – Can mentor others, lead teams, and improve or transform the concept

An effective education strategy will provide you the knowledge and skills needed to understand the role you play within your organization (or aspire to play within the organization), along with expected behaviors.

For IT professionals who want to broaden their skills across multiple fields of knowledge or discipline (the horizontal part of the T), education needs typically include at least awareness of management practices and complementary frameworks such as: Agile, Lean, DevOps, IT service management/ITIL, along with process and value stream design and improvement.

Example learning paths may include:



Take the courses required to achieve the designation you desire, or take only the courses most relevant to your role or areas of interest. Consider a cross-disciplinary approach to improve your ability to collaborate and to expand your opportunities.

What's in your education strategy? Contact us, our SMEs are here to help build your plan.

Learn more at [ITSM Academy](http://itsmacademy.com).