**Progressive Enhancement in Web Development**

Progressive Enhancement, to me, means developing a website in layers from very simple to more complex, with functionality and appearance for the end user in mind. For example, when starting on your website start with the HTML portion of the site and focus on just inputting the content that you would like to provide. Once the HTML content has been created and you are satisfied, move on to the CSS portion of the website. Again, start off simple and progressively layer on the styles that you think will complement your content without sacrificing end user compatibility. After the CSS portion of the site has been created, your site will now have the proper content and begin taking shape; It will have content and a good overall appearance. Now it is finally time to add in some JavaScript to really “bring the site to life” and give it the interactive sort of behavior that you want to provide for the sites intended audience. That is how I see Progressive Enhancement. It’s all about the mindset of slowly layering things on to get the desired product while insuring that everything will work together smoothly. The entire reason this is important is because of the varied level of styles/scripting that different browsers/computers can handle. Just because one user can access your site and have the complete functionality and usability that you have intended when creating the site, does not mean that every user across all different browsers and with different machine setups will be able to interact with your site in the same way. Progressive Enhancement is just one methodology for guaranteeing each user has the same experience on a given site. A different, opposite, methodology is that of Graceful Degradation. Progressive Enhancement in my opinion makes more sense because you are keeping the end users in mind for the entire process of website creation while those who use Graceful Degradation aren’t really considering the end users until they have the site completed and end up having to strip off functionality that could affect a different part of the site that you had not intended when the site is changed. Both methods are used for making the site accessible to all users, but it is best to stick with Progressive Enhancement. I also read the article, “Progressive Enhancement: What It Is, And How to Use It?”, by Sam Dwyer. This article also provides a great insight in to Progressive Enhancement and Graceful Degradation. Namely, that like I said, it makes more sense to use Progressive Enhancement, but in reality they are essentially just two sides of the same coin. In a way it’s just the optimist vs. pessimist viewpoint but for usability of the web.

Here is a link to the alternate article I read on Progressive Enhancement: <https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2009/04/progressive-enhancement-what-it-is-and-how-to-use-it/>