1. In your own words, what are the six stages of filmmaking, and what is each stage’s role in the process?

**Answer:** The six stages of filmmaking are development, financing, pre-production, production, post-production and marketing & distribution. The development phase includes coming up with an idea for a story, writing the script and making it a page-turner for any reader. This can be one of the longest phases of filmmaking because it has to be a concise blueprint and yet, needs to be precise about the emotional awakenings it wants to invoke in the audience. While all stages of filmmaking are important in their own right, the development phase sets the tone of the film. It can be called the mother of the filmmaking process. The financing phase involves putting together a business plan and raising the funds to make the business (film) produced. There are two ways to do this: the “studio” way will involve asking any major studio to fund the project in exchange for distribution rights while the “independent” way will involve raising the funds on your own, independent from a distributor. The latter way is usually akin to raising capital for a start-up company. The pre-production phase involves planning the shooting schedule, the budget and identifies every single element that will be needed for the production phase: cameras, lenses, props, actors, production design, colors, costumes, location. The script gets broken down in to manageable parts and aids in coming up with the proper tools for the production phase. Proper planning in pre-production phase will ensure everything is in aligned properly at the correct time and correct place to ensure proper production. The production phase is when all the talent/cast, various departments and the shooting takes place. This will involve in a lot of stressful fun. The next phase, post production is like making laws and sausages: anyone who wants to make films should be shown this not-so-beautiful phase. It takes the raw footage that we shot in production phase and putting the pieces together to make a cohesive whole. This is also where sound and music are mixed in to the final product in most cases. For auteurs like Tarantino and Coppola, certain pieces of music and sound are designed during pre-production. It helps the director sets the feel and tone for the cast and the crew, during production. During production, Tarantino plays the song – on the set – that he wants to use in post-production. This will help set the mood and tone for the cast. Before the shooting of *The Conversation* commenced, Coppola worked with the music composer, David Shire and used that original music during shooting. It was played for the actors prior to their scenes to get them in to the proper mood. Post-production is also where special effects, if any, are layered in to the film. The last phase is the marketing & distribution. The goal of this phase is to get people to watch the film and get them to pay for it. The filmmaker will have to sell the film to a distributer and one cannot self-distribute because of huge marketing costs, which can run in to the millions. Independent filmmakers do not have the means to handle the distribution.

2. How many phases can development be broken into? What are those phases and what is their significance?

**Answer:** The development phase can be broken down in to three phases: idea, writing and re-writing phases. In the first stage, the idea is built in to a story with characters and plot. In the writing phase, the first draft is written. After the first draft, begins the last phase: the lengthy process of rewriting. Research and attention to details are required. There are writers who specialize in rewrites and are known as “script doctors”. Aaron Sorkin was supposedly a script doctor for Schindler’s List. He was invited by Spielberg himself, supposedly.

3. What causes a script to get caught in "development hell?"

**Answer:** There are many reasons for this. The writer can be unwilling to relinquish his theme/characters/ideas while the filmmakers are trying to get a script locked down. There could be too players cooks in the kitchen when trying to develop an idea. Or during the re-writing phase, several themes can take over the screenplay and the original idea that got everyone excited can be totally thrown out the window. During to these and several other reasons, a script can be caught in “development hell”.

4. What is the difference between a "producer" and an "executive producer"?

**Answer:** A producer’s job is to secure a script with a narrative story that he wants to put on the big screen. One the script is secured; the producer will seek an executive producer (EP). An EP is sometimes the biggest investor in a movie. At other times, the EP is responsible for securing the financing for the film. The EP will represent the interest of the investors and will get a small portion of the money that he/she raises. So, while the producer handles the overall strategic logistics for a film (pre-production, production and post-production), the EP exclusively handles the financing of the film.

5. What positions make up a producer’s original staff? What does each position do?

**Answer:** After the financing is secured via the EP, the producer will begin putting together the logistics for the production by hiring a unit production manager/line producer (who are in-charge of below-the-line crew). The producer also has a production accountant to help him keep track of budgeting and expenses. These are the original production staff. However, additional titles such as associate producers, co-producers and co-executive producers are credits that are often given out as favors. For example, in a crowd-sourced project, it is no uncommon to see several associate producers listed in the credits: all of them are perhaps the biggest contributors to the financing of the film.

6. Explain the difference between "linear" editing and "non-linear" editing.

**Answer:** In linear editing, which happens when editing film, the original source files are modified during the edit phase. The editor had to go through the entire film to reach a point where he/she wanted to cut, and then physical cut the film. The editor would then have to go through the rest of the film (or start again from scratch) and find another point to cut and attach, to the original piece that was cut out. Needless to say, this posed an enormous amount of risk to the editors. Master footage could be permanently damaged if not handled properly. In non-linear editing, this risk is completely eliminated. Using either a video capture card, or a digitizing process, or by simply copy-paste, any number of copies can be made of the master footage without losing the compression quality. Random access is possible. Low resolution videos can be used to preview the footage without having to play the original footage over and over again. Final Cut Pro and Adobe Creative Cloud are two of the non-linear systems in use today. The former is an industry standard. The earlier linear systems included Moviola. Spielberg supposedly has bought some machines in an attempt to save the old filmmaking system, which exclusively relied of film (celluloid) and linear systems of editing.