

I.A. Human Behavior and Effective Communication

References: [Aviation Instructor's Handbook \(FAA-H-8083-9\)](#)

Objectives	The learner should develop knowledge of the elements related to human behavior and effective communication as required in the CFI PTS.
Elements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Definitions of Human Behavior2. Human Needs and Motivation3. Defense Mechanisms4. Learner Emotional Reactions5. Basic Elements of Communication6. Barriers to Effective Communication7. Developing Communication Skills
Schedule	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discuss Objectives2. Review material3. Development4. Conclusion
Equipment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. White board and markers2. References
IP's Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discuss lesson objectives2. Present Lecture3. Ask and Answer Questions4. Assign homework
SP's Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Participate in discussion2. Take notes3. Ask and respond to questions
Completion Standards	The learner will understand the 3 basic elements of the communicative process, recognize the various barriers to communication, and develop communication skills in order to convey the desired information to future learners.

Instructor Notes:

Introduction:

Attention

Interesting fact or attention-grabbing story

Years of thinking people have understood you. Unless you've known this stuff, they haven't.

Overview

Review Objectives and Elements/Key ideas

What

Basic human needs as well as defense mechanisms and effective communication.

Why

Learning is a change of behavior as a result of experience. To successfully accomplish the task of helping bring about this change, the instructor must know why people act the way they do.

How:

1. Definitions of Human Behavior

- A. The study of human behavior is an attempt to explain how and why human functions the way they do
 - i. Combo of innate human nature and individual experience & environment
- B. Scientific World Definition
 - i. Product of factors that cause people to act in predictable ways
 - a. Ex: how people handle fear is a product of individual experiences
 - Public speaking example in Aviation Instructor's Handbook
- C. Satisfying Needs Definition
 - i. Human behavior is the result of attempts to satisfy certain needs
 - a. Simple needs may drive behavior: food, water
 - b. Also may be driven by complex needs: respect and acceptance
 - ii. To a large extent thoughts, feelings and behavior are shared by all men and women
- D. Life Course of Humans Definition
 - i. As humans grow, behavior changes
 - a. As an individual matures, their mode of actions moves from dependency to self-direction
 - b. Therefore, the age of the learner impacts how the curriculum is designed
- E. Personality Types
 - i. Myers Briggs Type Indicator
 - a. Seeming random variation in human behavior is quite structured due to differences in way individuals prefer to use their perception & judgment
 - ii. Now used to discover future careers
- F. Instructor and Learner Relationship
 - i. Instructor must understand his/her style of teaching and as much as possible adapt to learners
 - a. Adjust scenarios to fit learner's learning
- G. Control of Human Behavior
 - i. Learners tend to submit to authority as a valid means of control
 - a. The instructor's challenge is to know what controls are best for existing circumstances
 - b. Create an atmosphere that enables/encourages learners to help themselves toward their goals
 - ii. It is the instructor's responsibility to discover how to realize the potential in each learner

- a. See the motivation and human nature generalizations (pg. 2-1)
- iii. How to mold a solid/healthy/productive relationship depends on the instructor's knowledge of learners as human beings and of the needs, drives, and desires they continually try to satisfy
- H. A working knowledge of behavior can help an instructor better understand a learner

2. Human Needs and Motivation

- A. Hierarchy of Human Needs – An organization of human needs into levels of importance
 - i. Until the needs are satisfied, one can't focus fully on learning, self-expression, or any other task
 - a. Once a need is satisfied, it no longer provides motivation
 - Thus, the person strives to satisfy the needs of the next higher level
- B. **Physiological**
 - i. Biological needs: Food, rest, and protection from the elements
- C. **Security**
 - i. Protection against danger, threats, deprivation affect learner behavior
 - ii. If a learner does not feel safe, he or she cannot concentrate fully on learning, self-expression or any other task
- D. **Belonging**
 - i. Belong, to associate, and to give and receive friendship and love
 - a. Learners are usually out of their normal surroundings so this need will be more pronounced
 - ii. Ensure new learners feel at ease and their decision to pursue aviation is reinforced
- E. **Esteem**
 - i. Needs consist of two types:
 - a. Internally - Relating to self-esteem: confidence, independence, achievement, competence, knowledge
 - b. Externally - Relating to reputation: status, recognition, appreciation, and respect of associates
 - ii. This may be the main reason for the learner's interest in aviation
- F. **Cognitive and Aesthetic**
 - i. Cognitive: need to know and understand
 - a. If a person understands what is going on, they can either control the situation or make informed decisions about what steps might be taken next
 - ii. Aesthetic: Emotional needs
 - a. If an instructor does not like a learner, this subtle feeling may affect the instructor's ability to teach
- G. **Self-Actualization**
 - i. When all other needs are satisfied only then can self-actualization be attained
 - a. A person's need to be and do what one was "born to do"
 - ii. Realizing one's own potential for continued development/Reaching personal goals & potential
- H. Help learners satisfy their own needs in a manner that will create a healthy learning environment

3. Defense Mechanisms

- A. Subconscious, almost automatic, ego-protecting reactions to unpleasant situations
 - i. Used to soften feelings of failure, to alleviate feelings of guilt, and to protect personal worth
- B. **Repression**
 - i. A person places uncomfortable thoughts into inaccessible areas of the unconscious mind. Things a person is unable to cope with now are pushed away, to be dealt with at another time, or hopefully never because they fade away on their own accord
- C. **Denial**
 - i. Refusal to accept a reality because it is too threatening
- D. **Compensation**
 - i. Learners attempt to disguise the presence of a weak quality by emphasizing a more positive one

- a. “I’m not a fighter, I’m a lover” philosophy can be an example of compensation
- ii. May accept and develop a less preferred but more attainable objective instead of a more preferred but less attainable objective

E. Projection

- i. Blame is relegated to others for their own shortcomings, mistakes, and transgressions
- ii. Motives, desires, characteristics, and impulses are attributed to others
- iii. “I failed because I had a poor examiner” – the learner believes the failure was not their fault

F. Rationalization

- i. Subconscious technique for justifying actions that otherwise would be unacceptable
- ii. When true rationalization takes place, individuals sincerely believe in their excuses
- iii. For example, failing a test because “there was not enough time to study,” when the learner skipped study groups and practice tests

G. Reaction Formation

- i. Sometimes individuals protect themselves from dangerous desires by not only repressing them, but actually developing conscious attitudes and behavior patterns that are just the opposite

H. Fantasy

- i. Daydreaming about how things should be rather than doing something about how they are

I. Displacement

- i. Unconscious shift of emotion, affect, or desire from the original object to a more acceptable, less threatening substitute

4. Learner Emotional Reactions

A. Anxiety – “A state of mental uneasiness arising from fear...”

- i. Most significant psychological factor affecting flight instruction
- ii. Anxiety can be countered by reinforcing enjoyment of flying, and by teaching to cope with fear
 - a. Treat fears as a normal reaction, do not ignore them
- iii. Introduce maneuvers with care so the learner knows what to expect/what their reaction should be

B. Impatience

- i. An impatient learner fails to understand the need for preliminary training and seeks only the ultimate objective without considering the means to reach it
- ii. Counter impatience by presenting the necessary preliminary training one step at a time, with clearly state goals for each step, while tailing instruction to the pace of the learner (i.e. slow learner vs motivated, fast learner)

C. Worry or Lack of Interest

- i. Learners who are worried or emotionally upset are not ready to learn and derive little benefit from instruction
 - a. Outside experiences affect behavior and performance in training – the instructor is not responsible for these diversions, but also cannot ignore them because they affect learning
- ii. Instruction should be keyed to divert attention from their worries and troubles to the tasks at hand
- iii. The most effective cure is prevention – ensure the learner knows at the end of each lesson exactly how well they have progressed and what deficiencies are present

D. Physical Discomfort, Illness, Fatigue, and Dehydration

- i. All of these conditions slow the rate of learning, and should be mitigated to the extent possible
- ii. Fatigue – one of the most treacherous hazards to flight safety
 - a. Acute Fatigue: Normal occurrence of everyday living
 - b. Chronic Fatigue: Combination of both physiological problems and psychological issues (financial, home life, job-related stress)
 - c. Fatigue impairs and adversely affects pilot judgement and decision making
 - d. Be aware of fatigue and adjust the length and frequency of training as necessary

- iii. Dehydration and Heatstroke
 - a. Dehydration: Critical loss of water to the body. Reduces alertness
 - b. Heatstroke: Inability of the body to control its temperature
 - c. Carry ample water on any long flight, keep the temperature cool, and wear light clothing
- E. Apathy Due to Inadequate Instruction
 - i. To hold interest and maintain motivation, provide well-planned, appropriate and accurate instruction
 - ii. Instruction should be meaningful. Teach to the level of the learner. Be professional (appearance and presentation of material)
 - iii. Once the instructor loses confidence, it is difficult to regain and learning is diminished
- F. Normal Reactions to Stress
 - i. Respond rapidly and exactly, within the limits of their experience and training
 - a. This is desired, stress should not overwhelm and cause abnormal reactions (below)
- G. Abnormal Reactions to Stress
 - i. Response may be completely absent or at least inadequate
 - ii. Response may be random or illogical, or they may do more than is called for by the situation
 - iii. Abnormal Reactions:
 - a. Inappropriate reaction, such as extreme over-cooperation, painstaking self-control, inappropriate laughter or singing, and very rapid changes in emotion
 - b. Marked changes in mood on different lessons (excellent morale/deep depression)
 - c. Severe anger to the instructor, service personnel, and others
- H. Flight Instructors Actions Regarding Seriously Abnormal Learners
 - i. Refrain from instructing the learner and assure they don't continue training/become certificated
 - ii. This is done by:
 - a. Arranging for another instructor (not acquainted with the learner) to conduct an evaluation flight. After the flight, the two instructors should confer to determine whether they agree that further investigation or action is justified
 - b. The instructor's primary legal responsibility concerns the decision whether to endorse the learner to for solo, or recommend for the practical test. If, after consultation with an unbiased instructor, the instructor believes that the learner may have a serious psychological deficiency, the endorsements/recommendation should be withheld

5. Basic Elements of Communication

- A. Doesn't occur automatically, a style of communication must be developed that can convey info to learners
- B. Basic Elements
 - i. Communication takes place when a person transmits ideas/feelings to another
 - ii. Effectiveness is measured by the similarity between the idea transmitted and the idea received
 - a. Receiver reacts with understanding and changes their behavior accordingly
 - b. A change in behavior is the goal of communication
 - iii. 3 elements of communication: The Source, The Symbols, The Receiver
 - iv. **The Source** (the sender, speaker, transmitter, or instructor)
 - a. Effectiveness as a communicator is related to 3 basic factors
 - An ability to select and use language is essential for transmitting meaningful symbols
 - a Effectiveness of communication is dependent on the understanding of the words used
 - b Basically, the words you use are important to learning
 - Communicators reveal information about themselves – self-image, views of ideas being communicated as well as the receiver
 - a Basically, have a positive attitude!

- Material is accurate, up-to-date, and stimulating
 - a Out of date info makes you look bad, and you lose credibility
- In summary, as the instructor speak clearly and professionally, using words the learners can understand; be positive, and know the information you're teaching
- v. **The Symbols** (words or signs, or simple oral, visual, or tactile codes)
 - a. Determine the symbols best to start/end and those best for explaining, clarifying, emphasizing
 - Then, determine which medium is best suited for transmission (hearing, seeing, touch)
 - b. Monitor the feedback from a learner as symbols may need to be modified for clarity
 - c. Learners need feedback on how they are doing (Negative feedback in private only)
- vi. **The Receiver** (the listener, reader, or learner)
 - a. Effective communication: Receivers react with understanding and change their behavior accordingly
 - b. To change behavior, the learner's abilities, attitudes, and experiences need to be understood
 - Learners come with a wide variety of abilities, tailor instruction to their level
 - Age, gender, cultural background, education, etc. can influence behavior
 - A varied communicative approach will succeed best in reaching most learners
 - a Not all learners learn in the same way, using multiple approaches is most effective
 - Experience, background, and ability will help determine the instructor's approach

6. Barriers to Effective Communication

- A. Lack of Common Experience
 - i. Greatest single barrier to effective communication
 - ii. A communicator's words cannot communicate the desired meaning to another person unless he has had some experience with the objects or concepts to which these words refer
 - a. It is essential that instructors speak the same language as the learners
 - b. If specific terminology is needed, ensure understanding (especially common in aviation)
- B. Confusion Between the Symbol and the Symbolized Object
 - i. This results when a word is confused with what it is meant to represent
 - a. Words and symbols do not always represent the same thing to every person
 - b. Make sure associations are clear
 - ii. For communication to be effective, the learner's understanding must match the instructor's
- C. Overuse of Abstractions (Abstractions are words that are general rather than specific)
 - i. The danger is that abstractions do not evoke the same items of experience in the minds of learners
 - a. Avoid abstractions in most cases
- D. External Factors
 - i. Factors outside the instructor's control that prevent a process or activity from being carried out properly (physiological, environmental, psychological elements)
 - ii. Physiological interference is any physical problem that may inhibit understanding
 - a. Hearing loss, injury, physical illness, etc.
 - iii. Environmental interference is caused by external physical conditions (like noise)
 - iv. Psychological interference is a product of how the learner/instructor feel
 - a. If either isn't committed, or if fear or mistrust exist, then communication is impaired
 - v. Consider the effects of these factors and mitigate them where possible
- E. Interference
 - i. Occurs when the message gets disrupted, truncated, or added to somewhere in the communication sequence
 - a. While the instructor/learner may believe an intact message was sent/received, that may be inaccurate

- ii. Additional feedback and confirmation reduce the harmful effects of interference

7. Developing Communication Skills

A. Role Playing

- i. Practice instructing to develop communication skills, techniques, etc.
- ii. For example: Flying with an instructor who plays the role of a learner pilot to assess your teaching

B. Instructional Communication

- i. Know the topic well
- ii. Do not be afraid to use examples of past experience to illustrate particular points
- iii. Determine the level of understanding by some sort of evaluation
 - a. Ask them questions to gauge their understanding

C. Listening

- i. One way to become better acquainted with learners is to be a good listener
- ii. Learners also need to want to listen
 - a. Teaching learners how to listen will improve information transfer
- iii. The pilot must be ready to listen and be responsible for listening
- iv. Listen to understand, rather than refute
 - a. If certain areas arouse emotion, be aware of this and take extra measures to listen
 - Emotions also can interfere with listening (for example, a strong fear of spins distracting the pilot from listening to the lesson about spins)
- v. Listen for the main ideas
- vi. Don't daydream
- vii. Take notes (no one can remember everything)

D. Questioning

- i. Good questioning can determine how well a learner understands
- ii. Ask open ended and focused questions
 - a. Open ended questions allow the learner to explain more fully
 - Explaining (or teaching) the lesson to you (the instructor) helps the learner learn
 - b. Focused questions allow the instructor to concentrate on desired areas
 - Focused questions are good to measure general knowledge of a subject
- iii. Paraphrasing and perception checking can confirm understanding in the same way
 - a. Perception checking gets into feelings by stating the instructor's perceptions of the learner's behavior and the learner can clarify them as necessary

E. Instructional Enhancement

- i. The deeper the knowledge about an area, the better the instructor is at conveying it

Conclusion:

Brief review of the main points

An awareness of the 3 basic elements indicates the beginning of the understanding required for the successful communicator. Recognizing the various barriers to communication further enhances the flow of ideas. The instructor must develop communication skills in order to convey desired info to learners and recognize that communication is a two-way process. The true test of whether successful communication has taken place is to determine if the desired results have been achieved and the learner's behavior has been changed.

PTS Requirements:

To determine that the applicant exhibits instructional knowledge of the elements related to human behavior and effective communication and how these impact effective learning by describing:

1. Definitions of human behavior.
2. Human needs and motivation.

3. Defense mechanisms.
4. Learner emotional reactions.
5. Basic elements of communication.
6. Barriers to effective communication.
7. Developing communication skills.

