Aviation Professionalism

For anyone who has been in the MSU aviation program for more than a semester, you’ve probably heard discussions centered on “PROFESSIONALISM” more than once, and I’m sure you will be hearing many more discussions before you graduate. In fact, it can get to a point where you don’t want to hear any more about it— you get “professionalismmed” to death.

So, in that vein, this article is not another one about what professionalism is, or how it is defined, or how it affects hiring in an airline or corporate flight department. Many of you will still have these types of conversations during the time you have left at MSU. What puzzles me is why aviation professionalism seems so hard to learn or understand for so many people. Most people recognize the need for professionalism in the very dynamic environment of a jet airliner cockpit flying in the very dynamic flight environment of most everyday operations. Yet, a fair number of us struggle to recognize professionalism in others or the lack of the same in themselves.

A few years ago I spoke with an aviation expert about professionalism. He related an interesting story to me. . . . He had once taught a class on professionalism covering all the areas of what it is, the traits found in professional people, etc. He spent about 2 hours discussing everything professional. About a week later he polled around three quarters of the students regarding their impressions of the class and how they view their own current professionalism. The response he received was not what he expected. Every student polled said they recognized within themselves those professional traits mentioned in class, but the others in the class—their peers, well, they had a long way to go.

So, how difficult is recognizing professional qualities in ourselves, or for most of us, those qualities we may still be working to master? Apparently, quite difficult. Understanding what sets you apart as a professional aviator, or those qualities airlines or other flight operations desire in their professional pilots is not difficult. These qualities and traits can be found in numerous articles, websites, books, you name it. The more pressing question is how do YOU make them part of your persona? Would you consider a crewmember you have been paired with for a trip, who is especially detailed and demanding toward following the rules to be professional or just anal? Unfortunately I have flown with those who would go with the anal description.

We know what professionalism means—or at least what it means for the most part. I’m sure many of you will learn more about this subject. In fact, you will learn more about this area your entire flying career. But, how do we make it part of ourselves? I don’t think there is any correct answer or an answer that fits everyone.

By: Tom Peterson

Consider These Questions

Is professionalism learned or is it just something we acquire with enough exposure to it?

When does this transformation begin or happen—in school or is this one of those things we can just turn on after graduation?

Finally, do we need to keep practicing and remain focused on being professional? Can we lose it if we don’t exercise it?
At this year’s Banquet we are lucky enough to have Dan Cherry coming to share with us his incredible, one of a kind story. On April 16, 1972 at 15,000 feet in the skies near Hanoi, North Vietnam, Major Dan Cherry first met Lieutenant Nguyen Hong My. In an intense five minute aerial battle Dan shot down the MiG-21 piloted by Hong My. Returning from his mission safely, he was always curious what happened to the pilot he shot down over Vietnam.

More than 30 years after flying his F-4 Phantom in the dogfight over Vietnam, Dan came across the exact aircraft in which he scored the aerial victory over a MiG-21. The aircraft was on display at a Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Club in Enon, Ohio. The tail number matched, and the victory star on the splitter vane near the engine intake was still present.

Finding the Aircraft again sparked his continuing curiosity about what had happened to the MiG-21 pilot that fateful day. Who would have guessed that over 30 years later these two soldiers would come face to face in Ho Chi Minh City, this time on national TV to share their stories.

I was recently lucky enough to have the opportunity to speak with Dan Cherry, and ask him what advise he would give aviation students today. “Aviation continues to be such a big part of my life, to this day I still fly a Cessna 172. Flying is always challenging, no matter what kind of airplane you’re flying. With over 4,000 hours mostly in jet fighters, every time I go flying, I still learn something; even in the small Cessna.”

“The challenges of flying continue to make it exciting, the environment your in is always changing, you’re always trying to do it perfectly, yet you know you can’t. That constant striving for excellence, and required focus and concentration it takes is somehow a positive thing for me as a person, and so many others that fly. It requires so much focus and concentration, that all of the rest of your brain that has your daily worries, troubles, and concerns, for a period of time that’s all put way in the back somewhere. So when you come down from flying, you have that good feeling that comes to you, because you have been able to give your brain a big rest. All the negative things that we all have to deal with on a day to day basis are gone for awhile. They have to be gone, because you’re focused on something really important. That amount of concentration somehow becomes very restful, its therapy.”

Dan Cherry admires the aviation students today, we are just getting started, we have great things to look forward to, and he wishes us the best. Whatever effort we are putting in to being aviators, is going to be effort well spent.

Another big thing that has been a part of Dan Cherry’s story is Aviation Heritage Park. It is an outdoor aviation museum that finds real people, which have a connection to their part of Kentucky, that have made major contributions to aviation all the way back to the early days of World War I through modern day space travel. His hope is that eventually they would have most of these wonderful stories represented in the park, as these stories can be incredibly inspirational and motivational for young people. These stories were accomplished not by some stranger from someplace else, but they were done by someone that lived right there, just in a different time frame than now.

At this year’s banquet, General Dan Cherry will share with us the story of how he came to meet his former enemy, how he found the plane that shot him down, as well as the progression of Aviation Heritage Park. I strongly recommend that everyone take advantage of the opportunity to hear him speak. The story is truly incredible, and fascinating. Take a better look into his story by either visiting myenemymyfriend.com, or checking out his book, My Enemy My Friend.

Dan Cherry, and Hong My will also be at Air Expo this summer in Minneapolis. They will have a flyable MiG-21 as well as the F-4 Phantom there. The dates for the Expo are July 14-15. You will get a chance to see and hear both of the pilots talk during the event. Dan Cherry strongly encourages all the students that are interested to attend, it will be one of the few chances you will get to hear their individual stories, and see both pilots together.

By: Erica Hogetvedt
RSVP to this event by April 7th

Minnesota State University, Mankato Aviation Banquet

Saturday, April 21, 2012 at 6pm
Mankato Regional Airport Corporate Hangar
Social hour begins at 5:30pm

RSVP to:
aviation@mnsu.edu
Or call
507-389-6116

Meet Dan Cherry and Nguyen Hong My: An Unlikely Friendship

Pilots Dan Cherry and Hong My first met 15,000 feet in the skies near Hanoi, North Vietnam, when Major Dan Cherry shot down Hong My’s MiG-21. Thirty-six years later, fate brought the two pilots together again in Vietnam, meeting face-to-face for the first time.

Their remarkable story is one of respect and friendship despite their differences, cultural barriers and past hostility.
Passed Check rides

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Altitude Chamber

This Chamber is used during aerospace or high altitude training to simulate the effects of high altitude on the human body. You will spend the first half of the day learning about human physiology, the effects of hypoxia, as well as oxygen systems used in aircrafts. The second half of the day, you will actually get a chance to sit in the altitude chamber as it takes you up to 25,000 feet, to experience hypoxia first hand. The reason this is so important to learn about is because everyone reacts differently, and there is a wide range of symptoms people can experience. It can also count towards half of your high altitude endorsement.

We will be departing MSU Thursday, April 12th for UND. It will be a full day of training Friday, April 13th and drive back to Mankato late that night.

I strongly encourage everyone to take part in this great learning experience!
What will make you stand out in the future?

As most of you know, we have multiple aviation related organizations here on campus. We have local chapters of both Alpha Eta Rho and Women in Aviation. Both are part of international organizations that have a great deal to offer to their members. Additionally, we are fortunate enough to have the Maverick Flight Team, which is currently preparing for the national competition in May. It is imperative that as an aviation student you get involved in co-curricular activities. When you go to an interview, you need something to talk about other than your flight time. Think about it, everyone taking an interview that day will have to be meeting the same minimum flight times you do. It is your experiences that will set you apart. Possibly more important, these groups are a place to develop relationships with other students. The students you meet here are the same people who might walk your resume into their airline or call you when their company has an opening that will not be posted publicly. So, get involved! I can guarantee the faculty will agree, the amount of effort you put forth now will pay huge dividends as you move out into the industry. Bottom line, employers want to see this stuff on your resume, and if you don’t have it, someone they interview will.

Sunday starting at 5pm in the Airport Conference Room. All students are welcome to attend practice and become part of the competition team for Fall 2012!

Questions?
Contact Kyle Jacobsen: kylejacobsen.cpl@gmail.com

National SAFECON Competition

Flight Team Update!
The Flight Team is busy preparing for Nationals. We have helped North Star prepare the Cessna 152 for a new paint job and are excited to fly it in the upcoming competition. Practices are held every week on Friday night starting at 7:45pm and Sunday starting at 5pm in the Airport Conference Room. All students are welcome to attend practice and become part of the competition team for Fall 2012!

Questions?
Contact Kyle Jacobsen: kylejacobsen.cpl@gmail.com
In early February I received a call from my recruiter stating I have been accepted as a Naval Candidate Officer and was also accepted into the Naval Aviation program for a pilot position. Many say this initial accomplishment is similar to being accepted into medical school at an Ivy League school as there are very few applicants who get accepted into a position of this magnitude. I was one out of forty applicants who were selected out of 450-500 applicants throughout the country for naval pilot positions.

After acceptance, you will travel to Newport, Rhode Island for the 12 week long Officer Candidate School. There, you will be trained to become a Naval Officer. I have talked to numerous military and non-military individuals and they describe this Naval Officer training to be the most strenuous and difficult officer training the military has to offer. At OCS you will be pushed to and beyond your limits of physical & mental training. You will run 1.5 to 3 miles a day and do countless numbers of sit-ups and push-ups. After a few weeks in, you will learn about basic naval procedures, history, intensify your leadership skills and more.

When OCS is completed, pilot applicants will then travel to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida where initial ground training will commence. Your stay here will last approximately 4 to 6 months, depending on the weather (hurricanes). Training here involves your basic aviation principles which include aerodynamics, meteorology, propulsion systems and more. The most exciting part of training here I’ve been told is the water rescue exercises. You will be all suited up in your flight suit, helmet and all, be pulled behind a boat with a parachute deployed and when you are at your highest altitude, you will be released simulating a post ejection drop. You will land in the Gulf where rescue helicopters will pick you up and bring you back to shore. This is one of the things I am highly looking forward to doing. When you leave here, you will be designated aircraft for your Naval flying career. People at the top of their class will get first pick, so do well! Most people get what they really want to fly though. The Navy wants you to be happy with what you’re flying so they will do their best to accompany your wants.

Next will be your actual initial flight training. For this, you will travel to Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas where you will train in the T-6 Texan II, T-44 Pegasus and the T-45 Goshawk. You will go through and complete checkpoints such as instrument single & multi engine, jet and aerobatic training. Training here takes approximately a year, again, weather permitting. You will then report to your squadron for training on your specific aircraft you will be flying. I have already chosen to fly the brand new P-8 Orion, a sub hunter.

Those looking to apply for an officer position of this nature should prepare themselves mentally, physically and academically. Strong grades are an absolute must! Applicants need to have a devotion to their country as well. It is beneficial to have excellent leadership skills and at least a private pilot license since the majority of applicants have little or no flight experience believe it or not. You must have a spotless background and absolutely no illegal involvement with drugs or alcohol. Any DWI incidences or major law violations will result in immediate disqualification.

There are many benefits being an officer, let alone the military. You have your current tuition bills heavily reimbursed, future college degrees paid for, see the world and travel nearly free. If you have the passion for serving your country, high integrity and the prowess for determination, do not hesitate to apply to become a pilot in the Navy. Many great things await you!

Candidate Officer Tyler Schwietz
United States Navy
1. The best power mixture is that fuel/air ratio at which
   A. cylinder head temperatures are the coolest
   B. the most power can be obtained for any given throttle settings.
   C. a given power can be obtained with the highest manifold pressure or throttle settings.

2. While maintaining a constant angle of bank and altitude in a coordinated turn, an increase in airspeed will
   A. decrease the rate of turn resulting in a decreased load factor.
   B. decrease the rate of turn resulting in no change in load factor.
   C. increase the rate of turn resulting in no change in load factor.

3. Required flight crewmembers’ seatbelts must be fastened
   A. only during takeoff and landing
   B. while the crewmembers are at their stations.
   C. only during takeoff and landing when passengers are aboard the aircraft.

4. What visible signs indicate extreme turbulence in thunderstorms?
   A. Base of the clouds near the surface, heavy rain, and hail
   B. Low ceilings and visibility, hail, and precipitation static.
   C. Cumulonimbus clouds, very frequent lightning, and roll clouds.

Answers: B, B, B, C

"In flying I have learned that carelessness and overconfidence are usually far more dangerous than deliberately accepted risk.”

-Wilber Wright in a letter to his father, Sept. 1900

Announcements

- BBQ at 7mile creek park Wednesday, April 28th 12:00pm
- Altitude Chamber Friday, April 13th
- Please RSVP for end of year Banquet by April 7th (Banquet April 21)
- International Meal being put on by International Students, April 17th Upstairs in the CSU 3-5pm. More info will be emailed soon!