

COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE TECHNOLOGY

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Spending time with my 10 year old daughter these days often opens my eyes to the way we communicate, and how that changes over time, to the total confusion of others.

Whether you consider the generation gap, the onslaught of technology and its effects on communication and verbalizing, or just the different ways we communicate and think within the realm of those industries we each work within.

This was never more evident than a recent incident in which I took my daughter and her best friend for an airplane ride. It was apparent to me how much we, in the aviation industry, rely upon the use of contractions, acronyms and abbreviations, which are derived from the progression of technology in our everyday lives.

We started off with good intentions, a simple flight around northern Colorado on a beautiful day, followed by the appreciation and thanks of a young lady who had just experienced her first flight in a small aircraft. I figured my ETD, loaded the girls into the 172 after deciding not to check DUATS, taxied to 34, and after takeoff from GXY, headed 180. Things quickly deteriorated from there. I realized that it may have been a good idea before my flight to have called the AFSS using the RCO to check the WX, because as I pressed on, I encountered IMC. Now I was wondering what the NEXRAD at FTG was showing. Not to be deterred, I contacted ATC, picked up a clearance, and headed back to GXY while talking to the TRACON. By the time I got there, the field was IFR, so I decided to shoot one of the IAP's, and chose the CAT I ILS. After passing the IAF, I realized the GS was OTS that day, which I would have known if I had checked NOTAMS. So I decided to use the DME in conjunction with the LOC to complete the approach. I tuned my avionics to pick up the LOM, and then the MM, which of course are associated with the NDB. As I neared the field, I clicked up the MIRL's using the

PCL. I was looking for the REIL's, but eventually hit the MDA, causing me to miss the approach. I suddenly wished we still had that MALSR for the PIR. I decided to go somewhere VFR, so headed 270 to FNL, but skipped giving a PIREP. FNL was pretty busy though, with numerous aircraft at the TPA, so I decided to go to APA instead. Halfway there though I realized I would have to enter the CLASS B, and deal with skirting around DEN. What the hell I thought, I will go the long way around and head for COS instead. I tuned in the ATIS, entered the CLASS C, and as I made short final in COS, I suddenly realized that it was 139, and since it was now 6/09, the TSA SD on ID was now in effect, which I personally felt was a bunch of CRAP. I wheeled right, freaked out, and headed 360, hoping the path home was still VMC. I wondered how many FAR's I had just violated, when my daughter and her BFF screamed **OMG!!!** As I looked out the window, I saw a CRJ heading right for us. Pushing forward on the yoke, I successfully avoided the aircraft, and found myself wishing then instead of flying today, I had just gone to a BAR. As I bucked a headwind while heading north at 2500 AGL, I wished I had been rated for MEL, since this SEL stuff just took to long. As I thought of where else I could try and land, I realized that I was pretty much SOL at this point, but at least I was back in the CLASS E. Heading back into northern Colorado, I calculated my ETA, and picked up the 180 off the GIL VOR while I continued 360 following a TBM. I checked the AWOS, tuned in the CTAF, and since the wind was now 090, I decided to execute the VOR-A. I told the girls that we would land with the help of the runways PAPI now, since the RVR looked okay. After looking around a bit, the girls asked exactly where that old man was, since they did not see him anywhere. I ended up going around because of some idiot in a POV, who had no business on the AOA. I then pulled a 180 to pick up the VASI for 27 instead. I set up the GA, and hit the TCH right on the mark. Unfortunately I landed hard because I was temporarily blinded by the REIL's, and as a result, went off the runway, setting off the ELT which would now result in a phone call from the CAP. They called an Alert III on me, and I informed them that the aircraft had 3 SOB's (that's souls on board, not the other thing you are thinking). The ARFF rigs had to hold short though because of a PC-12 behind me that was shooting the GPS, and which landed despite my location inside the RSA. Upon arrival on the scene, they hosed me down with AFFF and blasted me with Purple K, which made me MAD, since now I

was going to STINK for a few days. I got the aircraft back over to the hangar, and of course now had to have it examined by an A&P. But, I topped it off with AVGAS and was thankful to be back on the ground, when the ramp guy told me that the FAA FSDO was looking for me. Something about wanting to see my pilot's license and borrowing a shredder.

At any rate, as I pondered the events of the day, I asked the girls how they liked their flight. Their response brings us back to the fact that they really did not understand most of what I was talking about throughout this flight. As they began text messaging their friends in a language as foreign to me as my language had just been to them, I realized that my initial thoughts were true, and that technology really plays a big role in how we communicate with each other, and whether or not we can understand what others are talking about. I have also come to the conclusion that the aviation industry is second only to the military in the use of contractions, acronyms and abbreviations.

Now, before you judge me, and my questionable decision making abilities, please keep in mind that this entire story was one big LIE.