

Instructor, teacher, advocate, mentor, role model: these are just a few of the things that go into being a CFI. Brian Schiff is all of these things.

Some people might be curious why I listed instructor and teacher separately, the certificate you earn from the FAA says “Instructor”. The Instructor certificate gives an individual the right to get in front of people and be compensated for his/her technical skills and knowledge about aviation. This duly appointed right however does not make them a teacher. A teacher is constantly developing new ways to reach students, continually adjusting their teaching style to meet the need of the individual, and recognizing that everybody learns differently and is always learning himself.

Being an advocate takes on many meanings, from looking out for your students well-being to promoting aviation safety and the industry itself. Again, Brian is a leader in the field. He’s involved in the Wings program, he has given seminars on CRM, being PIC, Aeronautical Decision Making, Aerodynamics, Airspace, Emergencies, Automation Dependency, ForeFlight, NextGen, and more...all free of charge.

Being a mentor involves guiding your students in their training needs, this includes understanding what their goals are with flying. For example, the approach to training would be different for a man with a goal to fly a Cub off his farm than an individual seeking to fly for the airlines. Brian is equipped for all of this, he soloed in a Citabria at age 16 and he’s instructed for the legacy airlines in everything from Lockheeds to Boeings.

Being a role model is something that I personally believe the industry needs a great deal more of. Train how you fly, fly how you train: these are large shoes to fill and a difficult task to accomplish on a day-to-day basis, yet Brian does. Professionalism is at risk in the industry and we need more people like Brian to get involved.

I have never meet anyone who is as excited about teaching as Brian. I have worked and taught with him in everything from single-engine Cessnas to Boeing airliners for the past 28 years. There are many of excellent pilots in the world and there are many excellent teachers in the world, however, there are very few excellent pilot teachers. Brian is an excellent pilot teacher.

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