



Photo: Geoff Hansen

Meet

Daniel Kelman
Flight Instructor

Age: 23

Current Hometown:
Wilder, VT

Other Jobs Held:
commercial airline pilot, line cook, waiter, life guard

Hobbies/Interests:
athletics, technology, cooking, meteorology, aviation history

Strengths: professional, attentive to detail, orderly, resourceful

How do you use your strengths in your job?

On every flight I need to be aware of what is happening inside the airplane as well as in the airspace around it. The aircraft has lots of tools to make this easier so by staying alert and paying attention to all the resources available, I know what will happen next. In aviation we call this “staying ahead of the airplane.”

What was your biggest learning challenge in school?

I had a hard time with subjects that required me to be original or think outside the box. Although they were difficult, I gained many useful skills that I use when an abnormal or emergency situation arises in the air. No one plans on having something go wrong, so a safe landing might require some innovative and creative thinking.

What motivates you to go to work?

I am motivated by the dynamic nature of my job and the opportunity to learn something. Every flight is different and full of challenges to overcome. These challenges provide me with a chance to gain knowledge and experience. Whether I am working with a student taking his/her first flight or a captain working for a commercial airline, I look forward to what I can learn as well as what I can teach them in return.

Every job has specific skills. What do you need in yours?

Aviation requires an odd mix of skills. The ability to follow directions and procedures is essential, but being able to think for yourself is key too. A pilot needs to be methodical and steady, but efficient and prompt as well. However, since the pilot is the person ultimately responsible for the safety of the flight, the ability to make good decisions is paramount. The result is a safe flight—measured as an equal number of takeoffs and landings.