



The Best Low Cost Training©

Gary Palmer Feb 1 2024

We often hear the question “What do you call the doctor who graduates last in their class? Doctor.” This is used to compare training costs and emphasize that if you pass your practical checkride you are a pilot. More critically, it implies that when comparing schools with all else being equal, chose the cheapest. I want to argue against that mindset.

In my opinion, the fastest cheapest training has 2 drawbacks;

- 1) You learn the absolute minimum needed to pass the practical exam (yes, you are still called “pilot”), and
- 2) You do not learn enough to comprehend how much more you do not know, and that can harm you. There are many examples of content omitted from private pilot training, maneuvers and knowledge.

Pilot training needs to achieve one overall objective; to make you a safe pilot.

When you get your Private Pilot certificate we call it a "license to learn". Good training teaches you to keep learning and recognize the limits of your “new-pilot” abilities. When using the fastest path to your certificate, especially fixed-price “get-it-done” schools, training omits the extra time and exposure to discuss how much you still do not know and how to go about learning after you finish. That approach does not set you up for success.

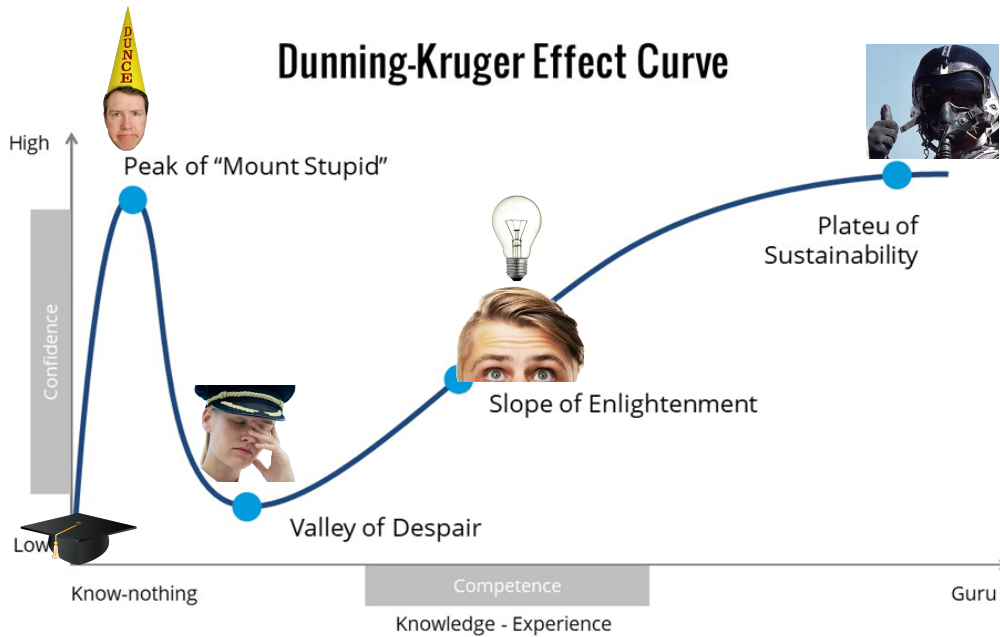
You can maximize your training benefits and constrain costs by:

- ✓ Working with your CFI so you have homework for each lesson,
- ✓ Being prepared for every lesson,
- ✓ Doing "extra credit": read, join groups, watch webinars, etc.,
- ✓ Using sims to help with procedures (they can teach bad habits so have a conversation with your CFI about it),
- ✓ Reviewing every lesson when you get home and chair fly, practice corrections identified when you de-brief after flight.

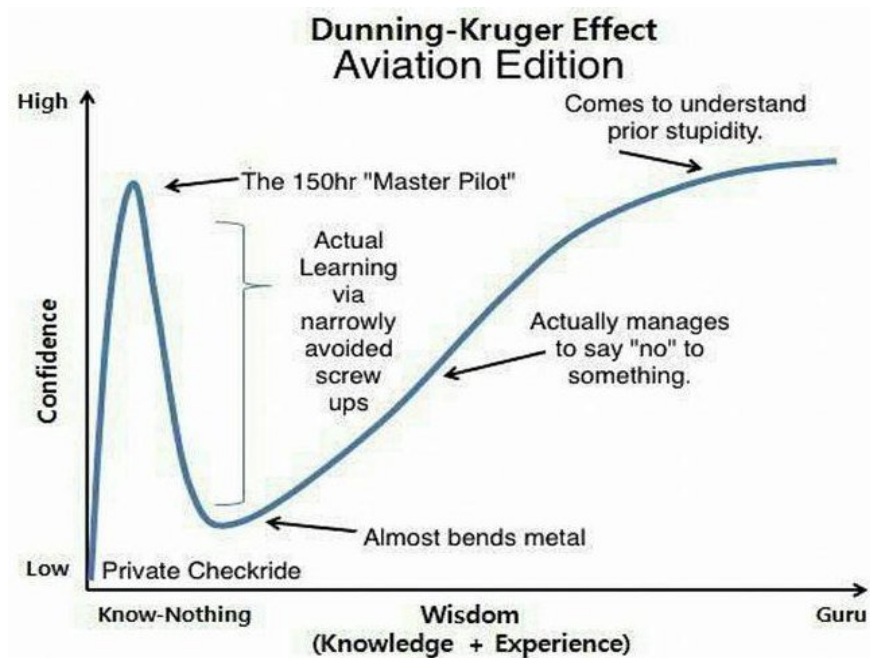
Upon receiving your Private Pilot certificate you have that “license to learn”; good training sets you on a path to continue learning and not just hold your head up thinking you are fully prepared.

A focus on fewest hours & lowest cost might get you a Private Pilot certificate, but might miss motivating your continued learning to set you up for success?

Consider the Dunning-Kruger effect (what I call “ignorance is bliss, until not!”)



Or, applying it to aviation:



As for that Doctor comment, I have a closing thought, what is that last-in-class doctors operating room mortality rate? Or more blunt, “What does the insurance company call the last-in-class doctor? High risk!”