

Female Flight Instructor Survey - Additional Open-ended Survey Responses:

Industry is slowly accepting women. Gender bias and sexual harassment are still issues.

Because many women have a “fear factor,” trust and patience are needed in instructing

More female simulator instructors are needed

In a mixed gender environment, women often do not ask questions.

Aviation careers are less glamorous in reality with long hours, extensive travel, and layoffs. It is difficult to have a family life. But, other areas of aviation careers should be introduced as airport management, consulting, as options which can be available to successful general aviation pilots.

The FAA needs to update its entire general aviation syllabus not only to be gender neutral but to bring it into the 21st Century. Some of their test questions are about issues which do not exist in the digital world.

Women are better at multi-tasking. However, studies show women lag in spatial ability. Women can be taught how to use their verbal and other strengths to bridge their natural brain wiring.

At first, women are less aggressive at the controls. However, given flight experience and greater self-confidence, they can develop a lighter and comfortable touch at the controls and don't try to “muscle” the airplane.

Often flight schools and male instructors expect women to “know how equipment works.” They act as if women are stupid because they don't know engines or mechanical things. Male instructors can get irritated if women ask too many questions that the male thinks “everyone” knows. Being “put down” and “shut off” can be a flying turnoff for women. I believe women have a higher success rate with freelance instructors who are sensitive and take the time to individualize the training experience.

Introducing aviation to women is empowering and builds self-confidence for them. It can be a great gift to their flight instructor, too.