

Employing Humour in Pre-Flight Safety Briefings

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Objective

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Examine the effectiveness of humour in delivering key safety message in pre-flight safety briefings

- Aim

1. Test 3 different pre-recorded safety briefings for memorability
2. Examine change in participants' mood as a result of exposure to different briefings

Background

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- Requirement to brief commercial aviation passengers about aircraft safety features prior to every flight (e.g., FAA and CASA)
- Authorities offer little, if any guidance on best method
- FAA do, however provide some encouragement –
“operators to be innovative in their approach” (FAA, 2003)

Informative not Prescriptive

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- Must include information pertaining to:
 - Compliance with signs and placards
 - smoking
 - Seat belts
 - Exits
 - Floatation equipment
 - Exit seating
 - Floor proximity emergency lighting
 - Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs)
 - Oxygen equipment
 - Etc

Existing Research

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- Limited research
 - research largely focuses on safety placards, not briefings
- Limited research notes attending to the pre-flight safety briefing is particular challenging for:
 - Males, and
 - Young males with high level of education (Johnson, 1979)

Existing Research

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Attention to briefing material is not made easier by:

- Lack of flight attendants' interest in briefing,
- Perceived poor quality of information in briefing,
- Perceived relevance of the material, and
- Method of delivery (Fennel & Muir, 1992; Parker, 2006)

Potential Lost Opportunity

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- Pre-flight briefing is an opportunity to:
 - Gain passengers' attention,
 - Educate passengers about key safety features, and
 - Positively influence passengers' behaviour (through mood).
- Knowledge = improved (potential) performance
- Positive mood = improved performance (reduced errors and improved egress time) (Tehrani & Molesworth, 2013)

Humour and Communication

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- Humour facilitates in obtaining and maintaining attention
- Humour also has been shown to:
 - Have medicinal benefits (Strean, 2009)
 - Facilitate in classroom learning (Stebbin, 2012)
 - Improve teamwork (Dean & Major, 2008).
- Word of caution – Humour positive in securing attention but may disrupt processing of key information (Chan, 2011)

Mood and Performance

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- Emotions/moods are moderating factor which are known to influence behaviour.
- Positive mood improves:
 - Task performance (efficiency) (Miner & Clomb, 2010)
 - Number of solutions generated (Carnevale & Isen 1986)
 - Memory of information (Forgas, 1991)
 - Performance during an aircraft emergency evacuation (Tehrani & Molesworth, 2013)

Aim

1. Test 3 different pre-recorded safety briefings for memorability
2. Examine change in participants' mood as a result of exposure to different briefings

Participants

- 61 (36 male) participants – university students
- Average age 20 years (SD = 1.94)
- 32 English as a second language speakers (ESL)

Experimental Design

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Content	Video A (no humour)	Video B (humour)	Video C (celebrity)
Audio humour	Nil	12	1
Visual humour	Nil	18	Nil
Celebrity endorsement	No	No	Yes
Female voice-over	No	No	Yes
Male narrator	No	Yes	No
Staff delivering safety messages	Yes	No	No
Number of key safety messages	41	34	38
Video duration (minutes.seconds)	3.16	3.39	3.35

Dependent Variables

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- Number of key safety messages recalled (%)
 - Following video
 - 2 hours post video
- Mood (Profile of Mood State – POMS)
 - Prior to video (pre)
 - Following video (post)
 - 2 hours post video (2hrs post)

Results – Recall of Key Safety Messages

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Video	Post-test % correct (SD)	Follow-up % correct (SD)	% change
Video A (no humour)	32.68 (13.76)	27.81 (13.42)	-4.878
Video B (humour)	45.25 (4.73)	39.37 (6.64)	-5.882
Video C (celebrity)	50.20 (6.11)	47.35 (9.36)	-2.857

Results - The Effect of Video on Mood

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Video	Pre-test Mood Score (SD)	Post-test Mood Score (SD)	Follow-up Mood Score (SD)
Video A (no humour)	34.50 (17.21)	37.11 (16.76)	35.56 (18.13)
Video B (humour)	39.38 (21.81)**	30.38 (18.39)**	36.65 (19.47)
Video C (celebrity)	31.18 (15.93)	34.36 (20.01)	33.57 (16.51)

** $p < .01$

Summary

- Recall of safety related information superior immediately after video than 2 hrs later
- Retention rate fell ~ 4% 2hrs following video
- Recall greater with humorous video and celebrity video, compared to non-humorous video
- Humorous video positively affected mood immediately post
- Changes in mood not evident 2hrs following video

Known

- Retention rate poor overall - key safety messages, even with captive audience
- Humorous video – positively influenced mood
- Humorous video – little effect on recall

Unknown

- Whether humorous video improves attention
 - Anecdotal evidence suggests it does (Asia Pacific Cabin Safety Working Group - APCSWG)

Limitations & Future Research

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- Limitations
 - University students
 - Captured audience
 - No noise (Molesworth et al., 2013a; 2013b; 2013c)
- Future research
 - Observational study
 - Investigate reasons why/why not passengers attend to such information

Thank you

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