



PODCAST · LAUNCHING Q4 2025

## **Own your aviation career - don't let the industry own you.**

The **Command Brief Podcast** helps pilots **own their game**—with expert interviews, real-world stories, and practical tools that develop the *critical soft skills* aviation rarely teaches.

- Build the emotional intelligence and leadership skills that separate thriving pilots from struggling ones.
- Get practical systems that work regardless of your training environment or career path.
- Connect with pilots who refuse to let industry challenges control their success.



## **Hosts**

### **Our Story**

Bert and Clay met through the First Class Leaders (FCL) Inner Circle, an online pilot leadership network where both discovered a shared passion: helping pilots overcome the barriers that prevent them from advancing in their aviation journey.

Bert brings a unique perspective from decades on aviation's front lines. As Professional Standards Chairman for TWA/ALPA/NetJets, he conducted peer interventions with pilots facing performance issues, substance abuse, and personal crises—focusing on supportive intervention rather than punishment. Combined with his background as a TWA Captain, check airman, and licensed professional counselor, he understands why pilots struggle and what helps them succeed.

Clay, a software company executive, private pilot, and executive coach, specializes in helping student pilots who get stuck in training. Through his coaching work, he's discovered that the root causes are rarely technical—they're mental: limiting beliefs, insecurities, negative self-talk, relationship issues, and lack of emotional intelligence that create real barriers to learning.

Both have witnessed the perfect storm: flight schools focused more on instructor hour-building than student success, combined with pilots who lack the emotional tools to navigate training challenges. The result? Completion rates as low as 20-30%, and even successful pilots lacking the leadership skills needed for career advancement.

Even worse, those who do earn their ratings often lack the emotional awareness and leadership skills needed to navigate an unstable career and advance to captain positions. This impacts flight safety, the supply of qualified professional pilots, and the work-life balance of pilots in uniquely demanding careers.

**We've both seen these challenges from the inside. The Command Brief gives you the tools to own your game, regardless of what the industry throws at you.**

### **Bert Botta**

21,000+ hours • TWA Captain • NetJets Captain • FAA Check Airman • Licensed Professional Counselor

- **Career-saving leadership:** Longtime Professional Standards leader who's helped pilots resolve issues that could end careers.
- **Psychology-backed coaching:** Goes beyond stick-and-rudder to address mindset, relationships, and pressure.
- **High-stakes clarity:** Teaches pilots to think better, perform under stress, and thrive in demanding situations.

### **Clay Conner**

Founder, Aviator's Edge Coaching • Executive Coach • Private Pilot

- **Solving the 70% washout:** Tackles the mindset gap that derails most student pilots, not lack of aptitude.
- **Executive tools for aviators:** Bridges business leadership habits to training: routines, feedback, decision-making.

- **Pilot-in-command mindset:** Helps pilots move from surviving the cockpit to leading with confidence.

## The Reality

**In aviation, you either own your game or get owned by the industry.**

### Student Pilots:

- Let emotional setbacks in high-stress training derail their progress
- Get trapped in fixed-mindset spirals with negative self-talk after mistakes
- Wait for perfect instructors instead of taking ownership of their learning
- Blame external factors rather than developing internal resilience

### Professional Pilots:

- Drift through careers waiting for structured development that never comes
- Advance based on hours alone without building leadership skills or emotional intelligence
- Let isolation, relationship issues, and work-life imbalance control their trajectory
- React to industry instability instead of proactively managing their career path

## Your Toolkit

**Practical tools and systems for pilots who refuse to be victims of circumstance.**

- **Master Your Mindset:** Techniques to stay sharp under pressure, bounce back from setbacks, and maintain confidence when training or career challenges hit
- **Build Your Systems:** Daily practices and routines that compound into career advantages, regardless of instructor quality or company culture
- **Navigate Politics:** How to succeed with difficult instructors, advance despite poor leadership above you, and thrive in imperfect training environments
- **Lead Yourself First:** Emotional intelligence skills that set you apart—communication, conflict resolution, and self-management tools the industry should teach but doesn't
- **Create Your Path:** Strategic career planning that doesn't rely on company development programs or industry stability—you control your advancement

**Stop waiting for the industry to develop you. Start building the skills that make you unstoppable.**

## Audience

- **Student Pilots** - Building strong foundations from day one.
- **Professional Pilots** - Upgrading seats and leadership.

- **Military Transition Pilots** - Moving sectors or roles.
- **Aviation Industry Professionals** - Instructors, leaders, and mentors

## **Podcast Guests & Content**

### **Expert Interviews**

- Aviation industry leaders and professional pilots
- Psychology and mindset pros
- Leadership & communication experts

### **Real Pilot Stories**

- Student pilot journeys
- Professional transformations
- Military to civilian transitions

**Interested in being a guest or partnering on an episode?  
Send a note and we'll follow up.**



**COMMAND BRIEF**  
FUELING GRIT AND GROWTH

### **Contact**

Clay@AviatorsEdge.net