AVIATION ETHICS SIMULATOR: NAVIGATING COMPLEX DECISIONS

OBJECTIVE

Students will engage in a complex simulation of an aviation company, making ethical decisions that impact various aspects of the business, safety, and public perception. This activity encourages critical thinking about integrity, long-term consequences, and the interconnected nature of the aviation industry.

MATERIALS

- Role cards with detailed job descriptions
- Scenario cards with complex ethical dilemmas
- Decision matrix worksheets
- Tablet/computer for each team to access an online "consequence simulator" (can be a prepared spreadsheet)
- Whiteboard or digital display for company metrics

ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN

1 INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

- Discuss the complexity of ethical decision-making in aviation.
- Introduce the concept of stakeholder analysis and long-term consequences.

2 COMPANY SETUP AND ROLE ASSIGNMENT (15 MINUTES)

- Divide the class into groups of 5-6 students, each forming an aviation company.
- Assign roles: CEO, Safety Director, Operations Manager, Public Relations Director, Financial Officer, Human Resources Manager.
- Each company creates a mission statement emphasising their values.

3 SIMULATION ROUNDS (3 ROUNDS, 15 MINUTES EACH)

- Present a complex scenario to each company (e.g., "Cost-cutting measures vs. safety upgrades").
- Teams discuss the scenario, considering multiple stakeholders.
- Each role provides input based on their perspective.
- Teams use the decision matrix to evaluate options.
- Final decision is entered into the "consequence simulator".

4 CONSEQUENCE REVIEW
(5 MINUTES AFTER EACH ROUND)

- Review the short-term and long-term consequences of decisions.
- Update company metrics: safety rating, public trust, financial health, employee satisfaction.

5 FINAL ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION
(15 MINUTES)

- Teams analyse their overall performance and decision-making process.
- Prepare a short presentation on their most challenging decision and its impacts.

6 CLASS DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION
(10 MINUTES)

- Teams share their experiences and key learnings.
- Discuss how integrity and ethics play a role in building a sustainable aviation business.
- Reflect on the challenges of balancing various stakeholder interests

SAMPLE COMPLEX SCENARIOS

1 WHISTLEBLOWER DILEMMA

- An employee reports a potential safety issue that could ground your entire fleet. Addressing it immediately would cause significant financial loss, but ignoring it risks catastrophic consequences.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL VS. ECONOMIC PRESSURES

- New environmental regulations will significantly increase operational costs. Options include lobbying against the regulations, investing in expensive green technology, or finding loopholes.

3 AUTOMATION AND JOB LOSS

- Implementing a new automated system would improve efficiency and safety but would result in laying off 20% of your workforce..

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Enhanced understanding of complex ethical decision-making in a professional context
- Improved ability to consider multiple stakeholders and long-term consequences
- Development of critical thinking and analytical skills in high-pressure situations
- Greater awareness of the interconnected nature of decisions in the aviation industry

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Introduce "crisis events" that test the company's ethical framework under extreme pressure
- Incorporate a mock social media response system to manage public perception
- Develop a long-term simulation where decisions in early rounds impact options in later rounds

AeroDiscover
Inspiring aviation & aerospace pioneers