

Personal Behaviour Assessments

Are you really Anxious or Aggressive? Or are you just Average?

How can you become well a “Well Above Average” driver instead?

How can you find out?

How can you change your attitudes towards other road users to make you safer, and become an ‘Advanced - or better still – a Defensive’ Driver?

There are two parallel paths of training to be followed. Initially we need to think in terms of Vehicle Control, which itself has three stages; and also of Situation Control, which is achieved through the application of Forward Planning to ensure full and total Hazard Perception.

The three stages of Vehicle Control are:-

- Smoothness of the transmission chain, which is effected through the accelerator to the engine, clutch, gears, transmission to the driving wheels;
- Maintenance of equal grip by all four tyres throughout bends and any change of direction; and
- Correct positioning and adjustment of speed of the vehicle through opening and closing bends.

Situation Control may seem to be a little more difficult to pin down in stages.

It is really dependent upon your abilities to look as far ahead as possible and take note of all that is happening, is likely to happen and that which might conceivably happen; and at the same time make contingency plans for each option.

This can only be done by applying a consistent driving plan.

If the plan is used consistently the driver can rely on quick reactions and excellent observational skills to maintain total control over any potential situation change. Skilful drivers often believe their reactions will always get them out of problems created by their lack of observation. Others hope they can rely on excellent observation to make up for weak reactions.

Foolish drivers are those who rely on the safe actions of all other road users to keep them from danger.

This is what Situation Control is all about - making sure that your own vehicle and its occupants remain perfectly safe regardless of what any other road user may do. This is why the DSA system of driving test marking is so successful. Dangerous and serious errors are automatic causes of failure at any stage of testing. Minor driving errors are only acceptable, (to the DSA), for those drivers who are taking their initial

driving test. Minor driving errors will one day, bite you on the bum, and could even kill you. An inefficient observation can be considered a minor error. sixteen will cause you to fail an L Test; an inefficient observation, when done inappropriately, could kill you: say when changing a motorway lane!

Advanced driving assessments cannot allow even minor errors to be ignored. Uncorrected and repeated, minor driving errors are the real causes of most road traffic crashes. L Test examiners are human and are allowed to ignore occasional minor errors. Advanced Driving Examiners and Defensive Driving Assessors know better; and have seen too many bloody car crashes to ignore any bad driving habit.

Advanced and Defensive driver training courses are aimed at identifying and removing or reducing **all minor errors**. Even repeated minor errors may eventually kill. Aggressive and anxious drivers consistently make more errors. Minor driving errors make all Road Users vulnerable. Repeated minor driving errors will inevitably lead into a confrontation. Unresolved confrontations rapidly turn into a crisis. Any Crisis Can KILL. Repeated Crises must kill eventually.

The two essential driving skills involved, are: **Brilliant Observation**, coupled with excellent and precise **Vehicle Handling Skills**

At this Crisis Stage absolute vehicle control skills might help; provided everyone involved uses them. However, unless the crisis is averted it becomes another Road Traffic Incident.

To everyone else a car crash may be just a statistic.

To those involved, it is often a matter of Life or Death.

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