

Flying Over the Fire

I've always been told – and discovered from personal experience – that making assumptions can be dangerous. In the book *Point Man*, author Steve Farrar tells a story that underscores this truth.

The photographer for a national magazine was assigned to shoot a great forest fire. He was told that a small plane would be waiting to take him over the fire.

He arrived at the airstrip just an hour before sundown. Sure enough, the Cessna aircraft was waiting. He jumped in with his equipment and shouted, "Let's go!"

The pilot swung the plane into the wind, and soon they were in the air.

"Fly over the north side of the fire," said the photographer, "and make several low-level passes."

"Why?" asked the nervous pilot.

"Because I'm going to take pictures!" retorted the photographer. "I'm a photographer, and photographers take pictures."

After a long pause, the pilot replied, "You mean, you're not the instructor?"

As noted, jumping to conclusions can be risky business. Be alert to good communication in any endeavor.

– Beecher Hunter