

Risk Management: Competence No.2

The second competence under Risk Management asks **'Were directions and instructions given to the pupil clear and given in good time?'**

'Directions and instructions' in this case mean any instruction given to the pupil by you. Anything you say that asks, requests, or directs the pupil to do something.

So that includes instructions giving directions such as 'take the next road on the right', giving instructions as part of helping the pupil manage risk and tasks. For example, when you are giving full instruction, so telling the pupil the steps, or when you are sharing responsibility and prompting the pupil to help them to carry out a task.

'Directions and instructions also cover, any verbal intervention when managing Risk to alert the pupil of possible risk critical situations that they are not responding to. For example, 'you are going to fast, check your mirrors and slow down, or you are approaching too close to the cars on left, check your mirrors and move to your normal clearance position.

When teaching PDI's to give instructions I talk about the three C's. As well as the instruction being well-timed, they need to be Clear, Concise, and Consistent. You need to make sure the pupil is able to quickly process what is being said, manage the instruction, and are not confused by them.

Timing is also crucial. So when you give instructions and directions to the pupil, they must be given in a timely manner, not too early or too late, they must be accurate and must contain enough information so the learner understands what is required of them. Remember as part of your Risk Management you need to check and make sure the pupil understands what the plan is and that they and agree with the plan.

Giving poor instructions can create safety issues for the pupil, for you, and other road users. Poor instructions and directions can also raise the pupil's anxiety levels, which in turn, can lead to safety issues and make any weaknesses the learner has, much worse.

If you give too many unnecessary instructions, it can overload the pupil, demotivate them as they struggle, it can create problems and a hazard, and make things much worse.

Think about when you drove to a major city for the first time. Somewhere like London, Birmingham, or Manchester. You were probably driving with more stress and pressure as the route and area were unfamiliar to you. In the centre of these cities, signage is everywhere. Often there are far too many

road signs, most of which are unnecessary as they can confuse road users. Lane markings might be unclear, information signs might be given to you too late for you to act.

Do you remember how that felt? In a similar way, your pupil is trying to cope with lots of things. They are trying to remember what they need to do, in what order to do it, and when it should be done. Plus they are under stress and pressure of the risk and consequences if it goes wrong.

If your learner is overwhelmed, by too much information or it's not clear to them or not given to them in good time. They will probably be feeling the same as your experience driving for the first time around that big city.

Do not forget every pupil is different so recognise when to give instructions and when to hold back by observing the learner, what they say, how they react, and their body language. Make sure, you adapt to their current level of knowledge and skill giving clear directions in a timely manner, so the learner is able to respond in the correct way.

So, in summary here are the main things you need to make sure that are consistently included in your training that shows you are competent in this area.

Firstly, ensure all your communication with the pupil is relevant, timely, accurate, appropriate, clear, and concise. Make sure you give directions that are necessary, not overloading, and confusing to the pupil that it may lead to safety-critical incidents.

And finally, make sure that you are tuned in to how the pupil is reacting to what you are doing. Recognise that it may well be your input that is causing the pupil problems such as overload or confusion. If that is the case, then make the changes you need to simplify things for them.

Ok, that brings us to the end of this competence in Risk Management. In my next video, I'll be looking at competence No.3 which is: 'Was the trainer aware of the surroundings and the pupil's actions.'

Indications that all the elements of competence are in place could include:

- clear, concise directions
- ensuring the pupil understands what they plan to do and agrees with that plan
- directions given at a suitable time so that the pupil can respond

Indications of lack of competence include:

- giving confused directions
- giving directions too late
- giving unnecessary directions

- failing to recognise when the ADI's input is causing overload or confusion