

Elbert Hubbard A Message To Garcia

A Message to Garcia Elbert Hubbard 1899

In all this Cuban business there is one man stands out on the horizon of my memory like Mars at perihelion.

When war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was very necessary to communicate quickly with the leader of the Insurgents. Garcia was somewhere in the mountain fastnesses of Cuba - no one knew where. No mail or telegraph could reach him. The President must secure his co-operation, and quickly.

What to do!

Someone said to the President, "There's a fellow by the name of Rowan will find Garcia for you, if anybody can."

Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia. How "the fellow by name of Rowan" took the letter, sealed it up in an oil-skin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and having delivered his letter to Garcia, are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail. The point I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, "Where is he at?"

By the Eternal! There is a man whose form should be cast in deathless bronze and the statue placed in every college in the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this or that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies; do the thing - "carry a message to Garcia!"

General Garcia is dead now, but there are other Garcias. No man, who has endeavored to carry out an enterprise where many hands were needed, but has been well-nigh appalled at times by the imbecility of the average man - the inability or unwillingness to concentrate on a thing and do it.

Slipshod assistance, foolish inattention, drowsy indifference, and half-hearted work seem the rule; and no man succeeds, unless by hook or crook, or threat, he forces or bribes other men to assist him; or mayhap, God in His goodness performs a miracle, and sends him an Angel of Light for an assistant.

You, reader, put this matter to a test: You are sitting now in your office—six clerks are within your call. Summon any one and make this request: "Please look in the encyclopedia and make a brief memorandum for me concerning the life of Corregio."

Will the clerk quietly say, "Yes, sir," and go do the task?

On your life, he will not. He will look at you out of a fishy eye, and ask one or more of the following questions:

Who was he?

Which encyclopedia?

Where is the encyclopedia?

Was I hired for that?

Don't you mean Bismarck?

What's the matter with Charlie doing it?

Is he dead?

Is there any hurry?

Shan't I bring you the book and let you look it up yourself?

What do you want to know for?

And I will lay you ten to one that after you have answered the questions, and explained how to find the information, and why you want it, the clerk will go off and get one of the

Elbert Hubbard A Message to Garcia is a timeless essay that encapsulates the spirit of initiative, responsibility, and diligence in the face of challenges. Written in 1899, this short yet impactful piece has resonated with readers for over a century, inspiring countless individuals to take action and fulfill their obligations without complaint or hesitation. In this article, we will delve into the life of Elbert Hubbard, the context of his work "A Message to Garcia," and the enduring lessons it imparts to modern readers.

Who Was Elbert Hubbard?

Elbert Hubbard was an American writer, publisher, artist, and philosopher born on June 19, 1856, in Bloomington, Illinois. He grew up in a modest environment and, despite facing numerous challenges, developed a passion for literature and entrepreneurship. Some key points about his life include:

- Hubbard started his career as a soap salesman but later became a successful publisher and founder of the Roycroft artisan community in East Aurora, New York.
- He was a prominent figure in the Arts and Crafts movement, promoting craftsmanship and creativity.
- Hubbard authored many essays, stories, and pamphlets, but "A Message to Garcia" remains his most famous work.

The Context of "A Message to Garcia"

"A Message to Garcia" was written during a time of great upheaval and change in the United States. The Spanish-American War was on the horizon, and the nation was grappling with issues of duty, patriotism, and the responsibilities of leadership. This context deeply influenced Hubbard's writing, as he sought to inspire readers to take initiative and demonstrate integrity in their actions.

The Story Behind the Essay

The essence of "A Message to Garcia" lies in its straightforward narrative. It tells the story of an American officer, Andrew Rowan, who is tasked with delivering a message from President William McKinley to General Calixto García, a leader of the Cuban insurgents. The challenge is significant: the message must be delivered in the midst of a war, and the location of García is uncertain.

Hubbard uses this story to illustrate several key points about responsibility and initiative:

1. Taking Ownership: Rowan does not hesitate or ask for guidance; he simply takes the orders and sets out to accomplish his mission.
2. Determination: He demonstrates unwavering determination despite the obstacles he faces.
3. Self-Reliance: Rowan's success hinges on his ability to rely on his skills and instincts rather than seeking constant direction from others.

The Core Message of the Essay

The central theme of "A Message to Garcia" is the importance of taking initiative and being proactive in our endeavors. Hubbard emphasizes that true success comes from individuals who can act without needing constant supervision or motivation. Some of the critical lessons derived from the essay include:

1. The Value of Initiative

Hubbard asserts that individuals who possess the ability to take initiative are invaluable in any organization. They do not wait for direction; instead, they see a task and fulfill it, often going above and beyond what is expected. This quality is essential in both personal and professional settings.

2. The Importance of Responsibility

Responsibility is another cornerstone of Hubbard's message. He argues that individuals should be accountable for their actions and decisions. When faced with challenges, taking ownership of one's responsibilities leads to personal growth and success.

3. Self-Motivation

Hubbard highlights that self-motivation is crucial for achieving goals. Relying on external motivation can be limiting, while cultivating inner drive fosters resilience and adaptability. Individuals must learn to motivate themselves in the face of challenges.

4. Overcoming Obstacles

The story of Rowan's journey emphasizes the inevitability of obstacles in any endeavor. Hubbard encourages readers to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth, suggesting that overcoming difficulties is a vital part of achieving success.

Why "A Message to Garcia" Still Resonates Today

Despite being over a century old, "A Message to Garcia" remains relevant in contemporary society. Here are a few reasons why it continues to inspire individuals across various fields:

1. Timeless Principles

The principles outlined in Hubbard's essay—initiative, responsibility, and self-motivation—are timeless and resonate with the challenges individuals face today. In an era where teamwork and collaboration are emphasized, the importance of individual contribution is often overlooked.

2. Applicable in Various Contexts

Whether in business, education, or personal development, the lessons from "A Message to Garcia" can be applied universally. The essay serves as a reminder that success often hinges on individual effort and determination, regardless of the industry.

3. Motivation for Leaders and Employees

For leaders, the essay serves as a guide to foster a culture of initiative and accountability within their teams. Employees can draw inspiration from its message to enhance their productivity and take ownership of their work.

How to Apply the Lessons from "A Message to Garcia"

Implementing the lessons from Hubbard's essay in daily life can lead to personal and professional growth. Here are some actionable steps to consider:

1. **Embrace Challenges:** Instead of shying away from difficult tasks, view them as opportunities for growth and learning.
2. **Take Initiative:** Look for ways to contribute beyond your assigned duties, whether in the workplace or in personal projects.
3. **Be Self-Motivated:** Set personal goals and find intrinsic motivation to pursue them, rather than relying on external validation.
4. **Practice Responsibility:** Hold yourself accountable for your actions and decisions, and be proactive in addressing any issues that arise.

Conclusion

Elbert Hubbard A Message to Garcia is more than just a short essay; it is a powerful manifesto that calls for initiative, responsibility, and self-motivation. Through the story of Andrew Rowan, Hubbard illustrates the qualities that lead to success in any endeavor. In a world where challenges are inevitable and the need for personal accountability is paramount, the lessons from this essay are more relevant than ever. Embracing its teachings can empower individuals to take charge of their lives, fostering a culture of initiative that can lead to extraordinary results. Whether you are a leader, an employee, or simply someone seeking personal growth, "A Message to Garcia" is a timeless reminder of the power of action and the importance of fulfilling one's responsibilities without hesitation.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Elbert Hubbard's 'A Message to

Garcia'?

The main theme of 'A Message to Garcia' is the importance of initiative and personal responsibility. Hubbard emphasizes the value of taking action without needing detailed instructions or constant supervision.

Who is the central figure in 'A Message to Garcia'?

The central figure in 'A Message to Garcia' is Andrew Rowan, a soldier tasked with delivering a message to General Garcia during the Cuban War of Independence. Rowan's determination and resourcefulness serve as an example of taking initiative.

What impact did 'A Message to Garcia' have on American culture?

'A Message to Garcia' became a popular motivational piece, inspiring individuals in business and military settings. It has been used to promote self-reliance, hard work, and the importance of getting things done.

How has 'A Message to Garcia' influenced modern leadership principles?

'A Message to Garcia' has influenced modern leadership by highlighting the importance of trust in employees and encouraging leaders to empower their team members to take initiative and solve problems independently.

What is the historical context of 'A Message to Garcia'?

'A Message to Garcia' was written during the Spanish-American War in 1899, a time when quick and decisive action was crucial. Hubbard wrote it to illustrate the qualities of individuals who can operate without needing excessive guidance.

Why is 'A Message to Garcia' still relevant today?

'A Message to Garcia' remains relevant today because its core message about initiative, accountability, and work ethic resonates in various fields, including business and education, where self-starters and proactive problem solvers are highly valued.

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The human body has 206 bones in total, though it's possible for some adults to have more. This is because the number of bones in our ribs, vertebrae and digits can vary from person to person, and so you can have up to 213 bones.

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