



Happy Holidays!

I recently celebrated two years with the University of Houston and I can honestly say there hasn't been a boring day! During this time, we have seen a 100% turnover in the senior management of the organization. In addition to my position, all of the Executive Directors are new, and there has been considerable turnover at the Director and Assistant Director levels.

This type of change in leadership brings different thoughts on how we accomplish our mission and a fresh perspective on challenges and solutions. Embrace this change, as this is how we will continue improving and achieve excellence. The questioning of the routine, the "why do we do this?" questions have to be asked, and answered. The "this is the way we have always done it" and the "that's not my job" responses will quickly be dismissed as not responsive as we seek answers that best support the mission of the University.

In addition to the leadership changes and busy operational tempo of a growing Tier 1 University, we have a \$1b Capital Construction program, a \$250m Capital Renewal program, considerable organizational changes and growth. Add Hurricane Harvey to the mix and the Facilities Team will be keeping busy for the foreseeable future.

Many years ago I read a short refrain that resonated with me called "A Message to Garcia". This was originally published in 1899, yet the message it carried was disturbingly familiar. I challenge each of you to read this short story and then look in the mirror and ask this question, can I "Carry a Message to Garcia"? The attitude that a Rowan brings is the lifeblood of a healthy organization and is what will push us to achieve greatness in everything we do. To that end, I challenge each of you to be a Rowan and a part of the team achieving excellence. We need Rowans that will be highly valued and recognized.

As the holiday season approaches, we stop and reflect on both our accomplishments and on our losses. I believe we have much to be thankful for this year. Those that have suffered loss due to the recent natural catastrophe can look back and still find joy in the heartfelt support of family, friends, co-workers and complete strangers that reached out to help. As a relatively new arrival to Houston, I can honestly say I was amazed at the response. There is a true spirit and strength in Houston that was revealed and I have no doubt that those impacted will find the strength and support to recover.

I am excited to be a part of the Facilities Team at UH! Go Coogs!

David Oliver

A MESSAGE TO GARCIA

By Elbert Hubbard

This is not a speech. It originally appeared as an article in the March, 1899, Philistine Magazine. It is given here because it is representative of the messages popular in the business world.

About a million and a half copies of this article were distributed by the New York Central Railroad. It has been translated into all written languages

During the war between Russia and Japan, every Russian soldier who went to the front was given a copy of A Message to Garcia.

The Japanese, finding the booklets in possession of the Russian prisoners, concluded that it must be a good thing, and accordingly translated it into Japanese.

And on an order of the Mikado, a copy was given to every man in the employ of the Japanese Government, soldier or civilian.

Over forty million copies of A Message to Garcia have been printed. This is said to be a larger circulation than any other literary venture has ever attained during the lifetime of the author, in all history.

A MESSAGE TO GARCIA

In all this Cuban business there is one man who 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 message could reach him. The President must secure his cooperation, and quickly.

What to do!

Someone said to the President, "There is a fellow by the name of Rowan who 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 the name of Rowan" took the letter, sealed it up in an oilskin 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 three weeks later came out on the other side of the Island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia -- there are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail. The point that 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 of the land. It is not book learning young men need, or instruction about this and 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 Garcia's. 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.

Shiphod assistance, foolish inattention, dowdy indifference, and half hearted work seem the rule; and no man succeeds, unless by hook, or crook, or that he forces or bribes other men to assist him; of 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 call. Summon any one and make this request: "Please look in the encyclopedia and make a brief memorandum for me concerning the life of Correggio."

Will the clerk quietly say, "Yes, sir," and go to 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 for 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 other clerks to help him try to find Correggio – and then come back and tell you there is no such man. Of course I may lose my bet, but according to the Law of Average I will not. Now, if you are wise, you will not bother to explain to your “assistant” that Correggio is indexed under the C’s, not in the K’s, but you will smile very sweetly and say, “Never mind,” and go look it up yourself. And this incapacity for independent action, this moral stupidity, this infirmity of the will, this unwillingness to cheerfully catch hold and lift -- these are the things that put pure Socialism so far into the future. If men will not act for themselves, what will they do when the benefit of their effort is for all?

A first mate with a knotted club seems necessary; and the dread of getting “the bounce” Saturday night holds many a worker to his place. Advertise for a stenographer, and nine out of ten who apply can neither spell nor punctuate -- and do not think it necessary to. Can such a one write a letter to Garcia?

“You see that bookkeeper,” said the foreman to me in a large factory.

“Yes; what about him?”

“Well, he’s a fine accountant, but if I’d send him uptown on an errand, he might accomplish the errand all right, and on the other hand, might stop at four saloons on the way, and when he got to Main Street would forget what he had been sent for.”

Can such a man be entrusted to carry a message to Garcia?

We have recently been hearing much maudlin sympathy expressed for the “downtrodden denizens of the sweatshops,” and the “homeless wanderer searching for honest employment,” and with it all often go many hard words for the men in power.

Nothing is said about the employer who grows old before his time in a vain attempt to get frowsy ne’er-do-wells to do intelligent work; and his long, patient striving after “help” that does nothing but loaf when his back is turned. In every store and factory there is a constant weeding-out process going on. The employer is constantly sending away “help” that have shown their incapacity to further the interests of the business, and others are being taken on. No matter how good times are, this sorting continues; only, if times are hard and work is scarce, the sorting is done finer -- but out, and forever out, the incompetent and unworthy go. It is the survival of the fittest. Self-interest prompts every employer to keep the best -- those who can carry a message to Garcia.

I know one man of really brilliant parts who has not the ability to manage a business of his own, and yet who is absolutely worthless to anyone else, because he carries with him constantly the insane suspicion that his employer is oppressing, or intending to oppress, him. He cannot give orders, and he will not receive them. Should a message be given him to take to Garcia, his answer would probably be “Take it yourself!”

Tonight this man walks the streets looking for work, the wind whistling through his threadbare coat. No one who knows him dare employ him, for he is a regular firebrand of discontent. He is impervious to reason, and the only thing that can impress him is the toe of a thick-soled number nine boot.

Of course, I know that one so morally deformed is no less to be pitied than a physical cripple; but in our pitying let us drop a tear, too, for the men who are striving to carry on a great enterprise, whose working hours are not limited by the whistle, and whose hair is fast turning white through the struggle to hold in line dowdy indifference, slipshod imbecility, and heartless ingratitude which, but for their enterprise, would be both hungry and homeless.

Have I put the matter too strongly? Possibly I have; but when all the world has gone a-slumming I wish to speak a word of sympathy for the man who succeeds -- the man who, against great odds, has directed the efforts of others, and having succeeded, finds there’s nothing in it: nothing but bare board and clothes. I have carried a dinner-pail and worked for day’s wages, and I have also been an employer of labor, and I know there is something to be said on both sides. There is no excellence, per se, in poverty; rags are no recommendation; and all employers are not rapacious and high-handed, any more than all poor men are virtuous. My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the “boss” is away, as well as when he is at home; and the man who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive without asking any idiotic questions and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing aught else but deliver it, never gets “laid off,” nor has to go on strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long, anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted. He is wanted in every city, town, and village - in every office, shop, store, and factory. The world cries out for such: he is needed and needed badly -- the man who can “Carry a Message to Garcia.”



Jaime Alvarez
Custodian 1
Jan 1, 2018 (17 years)

Retirements

Maria Alvarez
Custodian 1
Jan. 1, 2018 (13 years)

Morgan Murphy
Trades Assistant
Jan 4, 2018 (24 years)

Pedro Cortes
Refuse Collector/Driver
Jan 31, 2018 (26 years)

Platinum Anniversaries

Don Johnson
Stationary Engineer
December 1992 (25 years)

Administration & Finance Holiday Luncheon

When: Tuesday, Dec 12 from noon to 2 pm
Where: Houston Room of the Student Center South
What: Annual tradition will include a delicious lunch and door prizes. Winners of the Administration and Finance Departmental Awards will be honored.
Wear red and bring a canned food for the food drive. Tickets for admittance will be handed out by each individual department.



Facilities/Construction Management Holiday Party

When: Monday, Dec. 18 from 11:30 am-1:00 pm
Where: General Services Bay Area
What: Come celebrate the holidays with Facilities/Construction Management! There will be door prizes during the event.

Weight Watchers

WWs AT WORK Works!

If weight management will be a resolution for you this coming year, Weight Watchers may be an option to consider. A new Beyond the Scale series will begin in January. Look for membership and meeting details to be announced soon. For more information, contact Jennifer Rea at 713-743-0247 or jdrea2@central.uh.edu.



Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat for updates!
@UHFacilities
www.uh.edu/facilities

Upcoming Holidays

