Why Can't Employers Today Find Reliable Workers?

In a tight job market, graduates need to do more than ever to make themselves stand out if they want to land a position. Fortunately, there's a simple way to do this: read *A Message to Garcia* and take its advice to heart.

I ran across this short essay while paging through a manual of high school curriculum assignments from 1922. Written by Elbert Hubbard in 1899, the essay describes an incident from the Spanish American War in which President McKinley instructed a gentleman named Rowan to deliver a letter to General Garcia in Cuba. As Hubbard explains, Rowan accepted the assignment with no questions asked and relied on his own initiative and ingenuity to accomplish the mission in the midst of challenging circumstances. Hubbard's reason for telling such a story is as follows:

> *"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?' … It is not book-learning young men need, nor 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!'"*

Hubbard then goes on to describe how difficult it is for employers to find such a reliable worker in the job force:

> *"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. Slip-shod assistance, foolish inattention, dowdy indifference, & 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, & sends him an Angel of Light for an assistant."*

Hubbard concludes by saying:

> *"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 take 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 a strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted; his kind is so rare that no employer can afford to let him go. 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, & needed badly- the man who can carry a message to Garcia."*

If Hubbard sensed this lack of upstanding, principled workers at the turn of the 20th century, then what would he think of the labor force today? The labor force in which employers can't advertise for a "reliable employee" for fear of discriminating against the unreliable ones. Or the labor force in which employers have difficulty finding an employee who is neat, grammatically correct, and morally upstanding.

If today's young people want to find a way to stand out in a tough job market, perhaps more of them need to learn how to deliver a message to Garcia before they begin filling out job applications.

—

Dear Readers,

Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by becoming a member for just $5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler @CharlemagneInstitute and Gab @CharlemagneInstitute!

Image Credit:
Lily Monster bit.ly/1eBd9Ks