

# A Sense of Urgency

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**Great achievers have two things in common ... a systematic approach to success and a burning sense of urgency to achieve it.**

by [Bob Proctor](#)

History has recognized many great men and women who accomplish more with their lives every year or two than the majority of people do in their entire lifetimes. These so-called superachievers stand out in a crowd, like a brilliant beacon in a dark night. They earn a large share of the world's rewards, and they never stop earning these rewards. They just keep moving forward — systematically and with urgent purpose — toward another goal ... and another goal ... and yet another goal. They are constantly focused on producing great work. **They are competent thinkers. They are systematic. And they move with purpose ... URGENT purpose.** As a result, great work emerges.

Will your work be remembered?

There are many positive shared characteristics in the personalities of men and women who do great work. But they all have one thing in common: At one point in their lives, these men and women made the *decision* to accomplish more.

They made the decision because they knew — somewhere back in the recesses of their minds — that they deserved this better life. And, not only did they deserve this better life, but it was their *responsibility* to create the finest life possible — to create a truly memorable life by doing the work that pursued their loftiest dreams, whatever the costs, and whatever the odds.

Do you think the work you're doing this year will be recognized and admired — still serving people, still making a difference — 360 years from now? This is an interesting question. Many people don't care. Others — if they answered the question honestly — would have to admit that it wouldn't.

This question came to my mind when I visited Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and stood admiring Rembrandt's masterpiece *Night Watch*.

Rembrandt painted *Night Watch* in 1642 — at least that is the date marked on the painting. It was not the first time I'd seen his work, and, although I am not an art critic, I am fascinated by the detail and perfection in his work. So there my wife Linda and I were standing and enjoying it — when I began to think of how long ago he painted this picture ... and that the world STILL enjoys his efforts.

It is estimated that Rembrandt invested one year of his life in this single painting. I seriously doubt that each day, as he picked up his brush and mixed his paint, he was telling himself, "This painting must be of such great quality that it will be enjoyed for centuries." No, but **as you study this classic, it is obvious that each and every day, Rembrandt gave the best he had to give.**

Will someone say that about you, about your work, 360 years from now? Or, do you care? If you do care, you might want to follow Robert Russell's advice — he said, "There's no secret to becoming great or doing great work. **You simply do little things in a great way every day.**"

I think that is probably what Rembrandt did. **He did a little in a great way every day.** Three-and-a-half centuries later, I'm still talking to you about it.

Give your best today. It might make a big difference three or four hundred years from now. Laugh if you choose ... Rembrandt probably would have in 1642, but he still gave his best.

Does this daily giving of your best mean that you will immediately and always succeed? Not necessarily. But your efforts will eventually pay off in the end.

Theodore Roosevelt said, "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is not effort without error and shortcomings. He who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who — at the best — knows triumph in the end; and who — at the worst, fails while daring greatly — he knows his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

You don't want to be one of those cold and timid souls, do you?

The people we recognize as high achievers ... they didn't want to be one of those souls, either. So, they set out with a sense of urgency. It was time to do great work.