

“Does Everybody Do It?”

Speech to 81/81 – 90/90 Club Winners – New Orleans, LA

March 11, 1999

Mr. Rapoport congratulates his audience for not taking consolation in the question, “Does everybody do it?” He is not excited by what they have done, but by what they are going to do. As Berton Braley wrote, “The best jobs haven’t been started, the best work hasn’t been done.” Rapoport is ready to see what they can do.

Rapoport loves the fact that they reject being ordinary and strive to set themselves apart. Their definition of living is “being better today than you were yesterday.” Being extraordinary can come in many forms. Rapoport reads to a third grade class each week. One boy is much farther behind the class in his reading skills. Rapoport told the boy how much he cared for him and how he wanted him to improve his reading. Rapoport told him to practice reading out loud for one hour a day. Since then, the boy has improved past the first-grade level, and Rapoport expects him to be only a year behind after this semester. Rapoport’s young friend refused to succumb to ordinary expectations. Rapoport says, “This youngster is doing better than anyone has a right to expect.” Rapoport calls that extraordinary. He wants to see each of them achieve the extraordinary for themselves.

Kenneth McFarland wrote that the way to be wholly successful is to put light in a person’s face. McFarland said, “Do that job in such a way that, even when you are out of sight, folks will always know which way you went by the lamps left behind.” Rapoport

reminds them to do their work in a meaningful way that will bring them financial rewards and personal happiness.