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**America's Greatest Innovator,  
Thomas Edison: 1847-1931**



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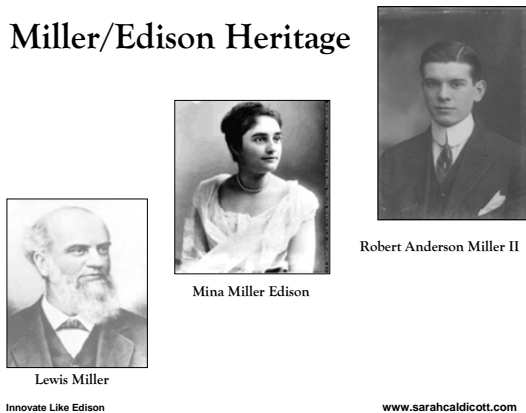
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**Miller/Edison Heritage**



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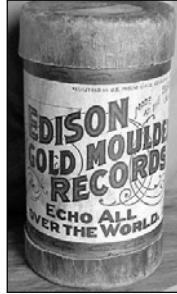
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### Researching the Book

- Spring 2004
- Dr. Paul Israel - Rutgers
- Edison Papers Project
  - 5 million pages



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### Edison's Greatest Achievement:

A systematic approach to Innovation



Menlo Park - the world's first Research and Development laboratory

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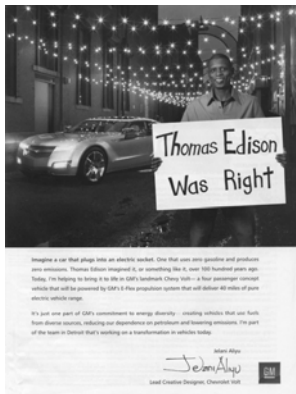
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### Edison a Unique Leader

- <3 months of trad'l schooling
- Kinesthetic learner
- Established 6 industries:
  - Telecomm'ns (1876)
  - Recorded sound (1877)
  - Electrical power (1879)
  - The Movies (1893)
  - Storage battery (1905)
  - Document duplication (1873)



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### Edison a Unique Leader (cont'd)

- >150 companies
  - U.S.-based, international
  - GE, ConEd, Coopers
- Thousands of employees
- "Flat" organizations
- Culture + Process + Speed



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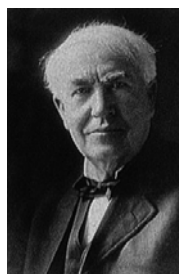
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### Five Competencies of Innovation™

1. Solution-centered Mindset
2. Kaleidoscopic Thinking
3. Full-spectrum Engagement
4. Master-mind Collaboration
5. Super-value Creation



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### C1. Solution-centered Mindset

“Imagination is the workshop of your mind capable of turning mind energy into accomplishment and wealth.



- Napoleon Hill

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### E2. Charismatic optimism

“Results? Why, man, I have a gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won’t work.”



- Fire of December 1914

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### E3. Seek knowledge relentlessly

“I gather the data of many thousands of experiments as a starting point and then I make thousands more.”



“I didn’t read books, I read the library.”

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### E4. Experiment persistently

Edison believed that Nature expressed itself in precise mathematical patterns. The omnipresence of these patterns gave him unshakeable confidence that he could ultimately decipher Nature's codes.



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### C1: What Companies Are Doing

- Target Stores
  - "Store for a week" in Rockefeller Center
  - Access customer groups of diverse ages, ethnicities
  - Affordable design
- Google
  - Beta testing new software
- Starbucks
  - New coffee flavors through "crowd sourcing"

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### C2. Kaleidoscopic Thinking

- "Edison has a remarkable kaleidoscopic brain. He turns that head of his and things come out as in a kaleidoscope, in various combinations, most of which are patentable."

-Western Union Patent Attorney  
Edward Dickerson



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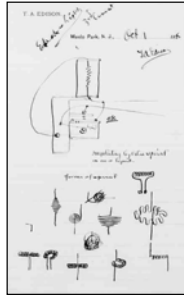
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### E6. Maintain a Notebook

- Part of Edison's "flat organization"
- Translates ideas into tangible form
- Allows a continuum of ideas to exist



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### E7. Practice ideaphoria

"To have a great idea, have a lot of them."

Edison's ideaphoria techniques:

- Analogical thinking
- Fantastical story-telling



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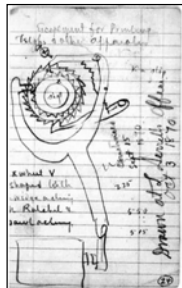
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### E9. Express ideas visually

Drawings helped Edison overcome cultural barriers in his laboratories, stay "flat."

Key: See the whole and its parts.



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### C2: What Companies Are Doing

- Daniel Pink's "A Whole New Mind"
  - Conceptual thinkers will drive the future
- Pixar
  - Story boards instead of memo's
- Merck
  - Drug design teams all use notebooks
- Morgan Stanley
  - Internal wiki's

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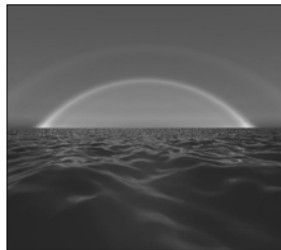
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### C3. Full-spectrum Engagement

- "Edison does everything with the least amount of friction."  
~ George Lathrop



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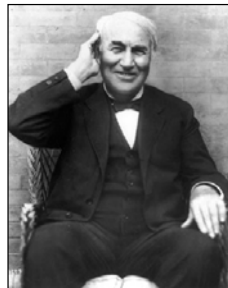
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### E12. Seriousness and playfulness

"Maturity is often more absurd than youth."  
~ Thomas Edison



Neuroscience has proven that "insights" are most rapidly created after studying data, then pausing and playing.

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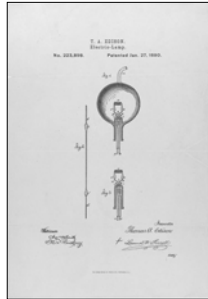
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### E13. Sharing and protecting

“The model of innovation is changing. It is increasingly collaborative and open.”

- Mike Wing, IBM



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### E15. Solitude and team

“The best thinking has been done in solitude. The worst has been done in turmoil.”

- Thomas Edison



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### C3: What Companies Are Doing

- **Procter & Gamble**
  - Connect and Develop
  - “Idea rooms”
- **General Mills**
  - Open innovation program: “G-WIN,” May ‘07
  - Progresso Light collaboration with Weight Watchers (“0 points” calories plus fiber)
- **Google**
  - “Play” is a central part of its culture

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### C4: Master-mind Collaboration

“Coordination of knowledge and effort in a spirit of harmony, between two or more people, for the attainment of a definite purpose.” ~ Napoleon Hill



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### E16. Recruit for chemistry, results

Edison tested new recruits by giving them experiments to complete, or parts to assemble.

“Get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus and the right people in the right seats.” ~ Jim Collins



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### E17. Multi-disciplinary teams



“Collaboration operates through...a weaving together of ideas, styles of work, and approaches that characterize different disciplines.”

~Prof. Vera John-Steiner

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### E18. Inspire open exchange

- “He conversed, argued and disputed with us all as though he were a colleague on the same footing.”

~ Dyer and Martin

- First circle, Second circle



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### C4: What Companies Are Doing

- IDEO
  - Hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds
  - Theatre, anthropology, science
- WMS Gaming
  - Seat teams in clusters on one main floor
  - Graphics, programmers, concept developers
- Apple
  - First circle = 100 individuals globally

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### C5: Super-value Creation

“The process of creating and delivering new customer value in the marketplace.”

~ Carlson and Wilmot



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### E21. Link trends and gaps to core strengths

Edison's 5-step process:

1. Identify trends
2. Determine gaps
3. Identify core insight
4. Link to capabilities
5. Test



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### E22. Tune in to your target audience

- Edison conducted what we know today as “ethnographic research.”



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### E25. Create an unforgettable market-moving brand



“No matter how good a machine should be invented by another and no matter how satisfactory or superior the results of such a machine invented by another might be, yet we find the great majority...have been waiting for the Edison machine and would never be satisfied with anything else...”

- Norman Raff, Frank Gammon,  
Film concessionaires

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### C5: What Companies Are Doing

- **Ethnographic Research**
  - Illinois Tool Works
- **Creating Platforms**
  - Procter & Gamble: Swiffer
  - AquaCurrents™ Science
- **Mega-Brands**
  - Apple
  - Nokia
  - Hewlett-Packard
  - Virgin

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### Foundation for Innovation:

1. Solution-centered Mindset
2. Kaleidoscopic Thinking
3. Full-spectrum Engagement
4. Master-mind Collaboration
5. Super-value Creation



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### America's Heritage of Innovation

The Edison legacy belongs to all of us.



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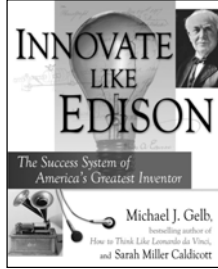
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