

Be the Best

Thomas Edison, who held 1,093 patents for his inventions – including the electric light bulb, phonograph and motion-picture camera – sold the rights to many of his inventions to Western Union and other large companies to keep his workshop going.

Over time, others made far more money from Edison's inventions than he did, but this didn't seem to bother him a great deal. He once said, "I don't care so much about making my fortune as I do for getting ahead of the other fellow." Edison's greatest desire was to be both the first and the best in his field, to out-invent everybody he could. He worked tirelessly, with joy.

Edison eventually established Menlo Park, the world's first factory for the making of nothing but inventions. It was a forerunner of the private research laboratories now maintained by many large companies. At Menlo Park, Edison promised to turn out "a minor invention every 10 days and a big thing every six months or so." At one point, he was working on 47 ideas at once.

Other inventors may have been richer than Edison, but virtually no inventor has ever become more enthusiastic or more successful. For him, enthusiasm and employment were inextricably bound together.

How about you? Are you enthusiastic about your work? Do you find joy in the service delivered to our residents?

There is a name for people who are not excited about their work. It's unemployed.

--Beecher Hunter