

## Title:

Thousands of Failures, but Thousands of Patents

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## Summary:

Thomas Edison failed thousands of times before he revolutionized the world by inventing and patenting the incandescent light bulb. Because of his desire to create the incandescent light, he was one of the most persistent people in history. The invention in which Edison had the most failures, the incandescent light, was one of his most famous inventions. His persistence also led to many other great inventions. He had patents on items such as electricity, batteries, cement, motion pictures, phonographs, mining, telegraphs and telephones.

## Keywords:

Persistence, Patience, Motivation, Confidence, Inspiration, Perseverance

## Article Body:

Thomas Edison failed thousands of times before he revolutionized the world by inventing and patenting the incandescent light bulb. Because of his desire to create the incandescent light, he was one of the most persistent people in history. The invention in which Edison had the most failures, the incandescent light, was one of his most famous inventions. His persistence also led to many other great inventions. He had patents on items such as electricity, batteries, cement, motion pictures, phonographs, mining, telegraphs and telephones.

How many times have you failed in your endeavors? When you were learning how to ride a bike, roller skate, play the piano, learn a foreign language, etc., didn't you fail many times?

Many modern conveniences are the result of Edison's ingenuity. Edison did amazing things simply by persevering.

### 1. Edison was persistent

After fifty years of efforts to create a long-lasting incandescent light bulb, Edison achieved success with the incandescent light bulb. Edison needed a material that would be compatible to form a long-lasting filament. He initially tried platinum, which only worked for about one to two hours. He tried carbon, which had the highest melting point. When carbon didn't seem to work, Edison

tried boron, chromium, molybdenum, tungsten, nickel, platinum (again). Finally, Edison got carbon to work as a filament material for his light bulb, which lit for over 40 hours.

What are some of the things that you are doing in your life and careers? Do you like what you are doing for a living? Are there other things that you would like to be doing as a career? You may ask, "what if I try something and it doesn't work?" Try something else. And if you're not successful, try again! Reference the example with a baby learning how to walk. How do most people walk? They kept on trying, no matter how long it took, to walk.

## 2. Edison learned how to meet the unmet need

The classic marketing philosophy says to "fill the unmet need." Edison invented practical items that a majority of the population could use, such as the light bulb, the phonograph, batteries, etc.

Edison not only could invent things, he could invent practical things. Every one of us has practical skills that we can offer the world. The world needs your talents much like the world needed Edison's talents. What are some ideas that you have that would meet the unmet need? What are you seeing around you that could be improved? Edison did the same pondering and look at how much he accomplished.

## 3. Edison knew he could invent something when he was determined

Edison's quest to invent the incandescent light bulb took him about four years. About his electric light experiments, he said "I was never myself discouraged or inclined to be hopeless of success." Edison knew that he could find a way to make the light bulb work and to be a practical item for the general public to use.

For those of you involved in obtaining goals, are you determined enough that you are going to succeed? Do you have that attitude of accomplishing something no matter what?

Edison saw thousands of better ways of doing things. He had to literally make many things happen in order to achieve success. Edison did not think that any of his failures were actually "failures." Edison said "If I find 10,000 ways something won't work, I haven't failed. I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is just one more step forward...." Do you turn your "mistakes" into learning experiences? Adopt the same attitude as Edison did. Learn from mistakes. Be persistent.

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