

Perseverance of Thomas Edison

Good morning, teachers and students. Today, I'd like to share with you the secret of success and perseverance of a famous American inventor, Thomas Edison (愛迪生). Thomas Edison was born in 1847. He was the father of inventions, including the modern light bulb, motion pictures, recording machine and X-ray machine. Edison has 1,093 U.S. patents and 2,332 patents worldwide. Father of modern research and development, Edison is not only an inventor, but also a successful businessman. He has created companies and is a marketing genius. Edison is proud of the fact that he has never invented weapons to kill. Thomas Edison's greatest invention was the development of a practical electric light. He invented not just an electric light bulb, but an electric lighting system that contained all the elements necessary to make the electric light practical, safe and economical.

With the invention of the electric light bulb, Edison in fact invented seven other system elements that were critical to the practical application of electric lights. These elements included the parallel circuit, a durable light bulb, an improved dynamo, the underground conductor network, the devices for maintaining constant voltage, safety fuses and insulating materials and light sockets with on-off switches. Before Edison invented the light bulb, every one of these seven elements had to be tested through careful trial and error and developed further into practical and reproducible components.

With such a great achievement, Thomas Edison is the right person to share with us the importance of perseverance and hard work. **To start with, Edison emphasizes the importance of perseverance and the "never give up" spirit.** Edison was nearly deaf; he nearly could not hear anything. Yet Edison said he seemed to be gifted with a kind of inner hearing which enabled him to detect sounds and noises that the listeners do not perceive. Let me share with you his famous wise sayings on perseverance. First, "Never get discouraged if you fail. Learn from it. Keep trying." Do not give up. Second, "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more

time." If you insist one more time or one more step, you'll succeed. Third, "Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it's useless." It may be useful in the future. It may be utilized in other situations. Fourth, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." In other words, even when Edison failed 10,000 times, he didn't think that he had failed. He just thought that he has learned 10,000 ways that didn't work. Fifth, "Be courageous. I have seen many depressions in business. Always America has emerged from these stronger and more prosperous. Be brave as your fathers before you. Have faith! Go forward!" Sixth, **"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."** In other words, when we give up, it is really a great pity, because if we insist one more step, we'll walk into "success".

Secondly, Edison emphasizes the importance of hard work. His famous wise sayings on hard work include: First, "There is no substitute for hard work." Nothing can substitute hard work. Even talent cannot substitute hard work. Second, "Genius is hard work, stick-to-it-iveness, and common sense." "Stick-to-it-iveness" is a word invented by Edison. It means if you want to succeed, you have to stick to the quality of "hardworking" and work hard. Third, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration (sweat)." In other words, ninety-nine percent of a genius is due to hard work and only one percent concerns his talent. Fourth, "I never did anything by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work." Achievement is due to hard work, but not accident. Fifth, "Personally, I enjoy working about eighteen hours a day. I average about four to five hours of sleep per night." Sixth, "We should remember that good fortune often happens when opportunity meets with preparation." If you do not have good preparation work, you will not have the opportunity.

In conclusion, boys and girls, learn from Thomas Edison the importance of perseverance and hard work. With perseverance, we soar high.