



Inventive Minds: Creativity in Technology

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Is invention really "99 percent" perspiration and "one percent inspiration" as Thomas Edison assured us? *Inventive Minds* assembles a group of authors well equipped to address this question: contemporary inventors of important new technologies, historians of science and industry, and cognitive psychologists interested in the process of creativity. In telling their stories, the inventors describe the origins of such remarkable devices as ultrasound, the electron microscope, and artificial diamonds. The historians help us look into the minds of innovators like Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Michael Faraday, and the Wright brothers, drawing on original notebooks and other sources to show how they made their key discoveries. Finally, cognitive psychologists explore the mental processes that figure in creative thinking. Contributing to the authors' insight is their special focus on the "front end" of invention -- where ideas come from and how they are transformed into physical prototypes. They answer three questions: How does invention happen? How does invention contrast with other commonly creative pursuits such as scientific inquiry, musical composition, or painting? And how might invention best happen -- that is, what kinds of settings, conditions, and strategies appear to foster inventive activity? The book yields a wealth of information that will make absorbing reading for cognitive and social psychologists, social historians, and many working scientists and general readers who are interested in the psychology of personality and the roots of ingenuity.

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