

## Richard Gee

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**From:** The Training Review [info@thetrainingreview.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 November 2007 8:09 p.m.  
**To:** Richard  
**Subject:** Richard - Take Notes Like Thomas Edison - The Training Review 22nd November 2007

## The Training Review

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**Thursday 22nd November 2007**

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## Why Take Notes Like Thomas Edison

Supplied by **Wayne Greenwood**

The famous inventor Thomas Edison was probably the most experienced note-taker ever. His diary which is still maintained as an important part of the United States historical record contains millions of pages. Important developments such as his work on perfecting the light bulb and electric lighting systems are captured in great detail. He never met a sheet of paper he didn't like.

What lessons can we take from his work today, a century later? How did his note-taking help him to become the world's most famous inventor with over a thousand (1093) U.S. patents in his name for a wide range of technologies from movie cameras and phonographs to cement making and electric lighting? In short, what made his note-taking and filing system so great? Edison's system was developed to support his life work and was very successful in doing so. The main elements of his system are as follows:

**1. Any useful or important development was recorded so that no effort was wasted in repeating experiments or efforts unnecessarily.**

Edison's method was once described as an "empirical dragnet" by Nikola Tesla, another famous inventor who worked for Edison for some time. Combining Edison's hard working and hard thinking methods with an effective record creation and retention system was a very important aspect of his work.

**2. Forward-looking.**

Edison's notes included the forward-looking things we tend to incorporate in many of our modern personal planners. Things like lists of contacts, appointments, "to do" lists, and actionable items for follow up or later review were all contained within his comprehensive system.

**3. Rearward-looking.**

The ability to go back and check his written record was useful in several ways. He was able to use his records in various lawsuits filed against him and by him against others as evidence and to substantiate his claims. His competitors were often unable to compete with his records so he often came out victorious in these legal battles. He was always able to review past work and avoid repeatedly going down dead-end roads. He could always review whatever he had said or was told.

He never had to remember most things as long as he could remember how to look it up later.

To read the remainder of the article and Thomas Edison's other key points please [Click Here](#)

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## **On This Day (22nd November)**

**1718** Blackbeard killed off North Carolina

**1958** Jamie Lee Curtis Born

1963 John F Kennedy Assassinated, Dallas Texas

1980 Mae West Dies

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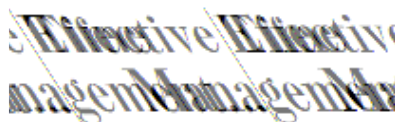
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**John Bell - Editor**  
**Advanced Publishing**  
PO Box 407  
Vaucluse, NSW 2030  
Ph: 02 9337 3323  
E-mail: [info@thetrainingreview.com](mailto:info@thetrainingreview.com)

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