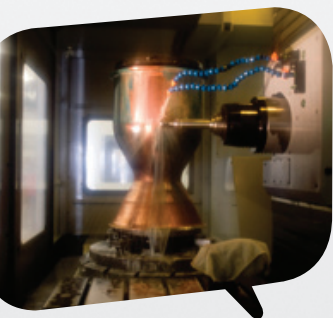


Elon Musk

Highlight Video Transcript



What do electric cars have in common with life on Mars?

One man — Elon Musk. This multitalented inventor founded SpaceX, a company that develops and manufactures space vehicles, and Tesla Motors, which produces 100% electricity-powered luxury roadsters.

How does one person balance diverse interests and manage successful endeavors in space technology, sustainable energy and the Internet? From his early days teaching himself to program computers, learn how Elon Musk has worked to improve the quality of life for everyone through technology.

In Thomas Edison's Menlo Park complex, the machine shop served as a bridge between two worlds. One was a world of practicality — advancing the creation of Edison's most commercially successful inventions. The other, a world of experimentation — exploring what was possible.

A similar integration of experiment and practicality exists in Hawthorne, California, at a company known as SpaceX. Its business is developing rockets that place commercial satellites in orbit. But SpaceX has broader ambitions: creating technologically astounding rockets that, at some point in the future, could carry manned missions to Mars.

At the helm of SpaceX is, an individual who came to prominence in the creation of PayPal . . . who is Chairman and CEO of the electric sports car manufacturer Tesla Motors . . . and who has a passion for doing things others only dream about.



Bottom: The second floor of Thomas Edison's Menlo Park Laboratory (lower right) in Greenfield Village served as the center of the experimental process. New ideas and solutions were developed and tested here. Edison inventions and patent models (left) were displayed in the laboratory as a reminder of Edison's ingenuity. Top: Thomas Edison's Menlo Park Laboratory in Greenfield Village.

Elon Musk, Entrepreneur

PayPal, Tesla Motors, SolarCity, SpaceX. Technological adventurer. Fearless opponent of taking “no” for an answer.

04:17:45; 00

Well, I think it's really a mindset. You have to decide. We're going to try to do things differently . . . well, provided that they're better. You shouldn't do things differently just because they're different. They need to be . . . better. But I think you sort of have to decide. Let's think beyond the normal stuff and have an environment where that sort of thinking is encouraged and rewarded — and where it's okay to fail, as well. Because when you try new things, you try this idea, that idea . . . well, a large number of them are not gonna work . . . and that has to be ok. If every time somebody comes up with an idea it has to be successful, you're not gonna get people coming up with ideas.

Staying inspired while staying grounded

04:15:36; 17

I try to make it a really fun place to work, really enjoyable. And you know, I talk about the grand, you know, the vision of SpaceX, where we wanna go, what we wanna do — we wanna take people to orbit and beyond. We ultimately want to be the company that makes a difference in extension of life beyond Earth — which is one of the most important things that life itself could achieve. And so, you construct this, you know, great Holy Grail potential in the future. You have to stay grounded in the short term, cause if you don't do things that pay the bills, you're not gonna achieve the ultimate launch and objective. But it's nice to have that sort of Holy Grail — long-term potential out there as inspiration for coming to work.

It actually is rocket science

03:01:00:02

Well, it's easy to get somewhat blase about a rocket factory if you're here every day. . . . I mean, this really is a rocket factory. And you're walking around and that's a rocket engine. And that's a stage that's going to go into orbit. And that's a spacecraft that's gonna carry people to the space station. And these are pretty remarkable things. But I have to remind myself of that from time to time because as I walk around, all I tend to see are “how we're gonna fix that.” “We gotta improve this.” “We gotta change that design.” So, I have to sort of bring myself back, think about the big picture and remind myself that this is, actually, pretty cool, unusual stuff.



Elon Musk

“So I have to sort of bring myself back, think about the big picture and remind myself that this is, actually, pretty cool, unusual stuff.”
— Elon Musk



Prototype of the SpaceX Dragon space vehicle.

Engineering and production

04:21:02; 15

It's good to combine engineering and production. So have development and production close together, because when you try to make something, there's a big leap between making that first prototype and actually manufacturing it in a large quantity with good quality. It's really hard to make that leap. And for some reason people decide, oh, they're gonna do engineering here and do the manufacturing, you know, on the other side of the world. And I think that actually ends up being often being pretty inefficient. I like that combination of engineering and production.

To Mars

04:22:54; 28

I do wanna go to space — and eventually it would be really cool if I could go to Mars. That would be super awesome. But this is not about me getting to space; it's really about enabling others to get to space. It's about enabling the extension of life beyond Earth. So I'd like to go in the first one. If I didn't have so much depending on me, I would, actually.

04:23:19; 28

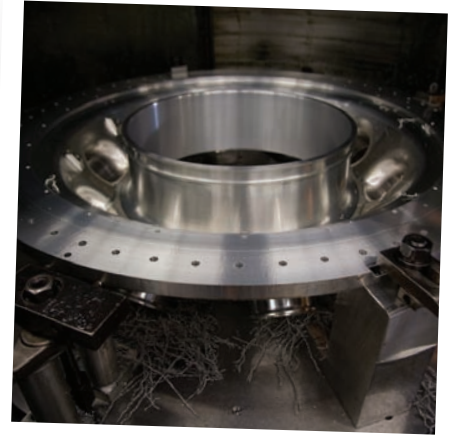
You know, early in life, I did lots of risky things when I didn't have that much that was depending on me. Now, I have to be more cautious about risky things.

03: 27:13; 15

It will be at least as important as life going from the oceans to land and arguably more important, because life could go gradually from the oceans to land and, you know, if it got a little uncomfortable on the beach, you can hop back in the ocean. But extending life to another planet . . . is a huge quantum leap.

03:28:05; 22

You have to go hundreds of millions of miles across extremely hostile environment to a planet which is completely unlike anything you've evolved to live on.



Fabricated component for a rocket engine.

“There’s a big leap between making that first prototype and actually manufacturing it in a large quantity.”
— Elon Musk



Rocket booster under construction.

The United States of ideas

04:10:59; 19

I think the United States is more open to new ideas than any country in the world. And I think it becomes somewhat of a self-fulfilling prophecy in that because the United States is open to new ideas, it attracted people from around the world who had new ideas. So now it's filled with people who like new ideas. And who aren't bound by history.

Beyond ordinary

04:12:48; 26

I think people can choose to be not ordinary. You know, they can choose to not necessarily conform to the conventions that were taught to them by their parents. So, yes, I think it's possible for ordinary people to choose to be extraordinary.



Test and installation of rocket electrical circuitry.

Elon Musk has a lot more to say.
Visit OnInnovation.com

to see his full, unedited interview, read the complete transcript
and connect with other visionaries thinking out loud.



Prototype of the manned SpaceX Dragon space vehicle.