

Two-Minute Drill



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New Year – New Beginning

Thomas Adams saved us from the disgust of garlic, the odium of onions and the horror of halitosis.

When introduced to "chicle" a latex-like sap from the Mexican evergreen, the preverbal lightbulb went off in Adams' head: could a derivative of chicle be a substitute for rubber? He tried it in toys, used it to make masks, and formed it into rain boots. Nothing worked. Exasperated and near defeat, he popped a small wedge of the resin into his mouth. Chewing it slowly, Adams thought: "This wouldn't be bad if I added a little licorice flavor". In 1870, Adams opened the world's first chewing gum factory and produced his Black Jack gum.

For those who have made the error of eating a plate of forty-clove garlic chicken on a first date: we salute you Thomas Adams.

Consider the word "invent" with its Latin-root meaning, "to come in upon." Another word that closely fits the definition "to come in upon" is the word "focus".

Invention does not come through concentration on that which is extraordinary but lies beyond our control; rather, inventive minds work by focusing on that which is simple and true, in our control and can be used in a different way.

How to win? Focus on simple solutions, lying at the core of what you know and what you control. These are the solutions that cause us to shout, "Eureka" the beautiful Greek exclamation for, "I have found it!"

Ask yourself:

What personal attributes -- skills, talents, resources -- do I want to re-invent?
How can I use my competencies resourcefully?