
Henry Ford: Captain Of Industry

During the mid to late nineteenth century, the substantial influx of immigrants from all parts of the world coming to the United States of America created a large workforce and lower class. As a result, American businessmen were able to capitalize off this 'resource' and gain wealth and power. Many of these men became tycoons, known for either ruthlessly and inmorally attaining these gains for themselves or using their own wealth to better American society. Those that gave back to their communities became known as Captains of Industries. Henry Ford, one of the wealthiest men during this time period, became well known for his creation of the Model T, an affordable and easy to use automobile. His introduction of the assembly line greatly impacted the way factories mass produced products, consumerism in America, and created a new market in the economy. In addition to contributing to the economic side of America, Ford played a role in the social aspect of people's lives by donating millions of dollars to his foundation and community based programs. Henry Ford is a Captain of Industry, positively contributing to the country by reshaping the industrial workforce and providing the masses with an array of financial support.

One of Henry Ford's most epochal contributions to the world is the assembly line. The assembly line was first implemented on December 1, 1913, and allows for workers to stay stationed in a certain area of the factory and perform one task, in contrast to that of a group of workers moving around building one whole vehicle (A. Brinkley). This technique revolutionized mass production. Employees no longer needed to be highly skilled in a certain field. Instead, one person could be trained to complete one part of the car and another person completes a different part. Ford Motor Company was able to manufacture cars at a much faster speed reducing the time from twelve hours to an hour and a half (Stanford), allowing for the production cost and price of the product to decrease. This makes him a captain of industry because he is introducing an important technique to the world. He's Not the only one profiting.

After introducing the assembly line and selling thousands of automobiles, Ford began to reshape the relationship his company had with its employees. One way he does this is by creating schools inside the factories to teach the workers english. A reason for this is because many of the workers were immigrants that did not speak english, creating a language barrier between employees and employers. Workers would attend classes either before or after their shifts ended (Worstall). Also, Ford increased the pay of many of his workers to at least five dollars a day in hopes of creating a happier and more efficient work environment. The Detroit Journal states, "The present minimum wage in great motor car factor is \$2. 34. From next Monday to the end of the year, even the lowest of laborer and the men who merely sweeps the floor will get at least \$5 a day. " Ford's employees were making more than many other factory workers while still occupying a low-skill job. As well as receiving better pay, they also worked less hours than other factory employees. No longer were they working nine hours a day or one-hundred hours a week at factories, but instead eight hour shifts—allowing people to go home and spend more time with their families. Ford implementing a 40 hour work week at his company and many years of pressure from labor unions (Ward) allowed for the modern labor standard of today. Henry Ford once stated, "It is high time to rid ourselves of the notion that leisure for workmen is either lost time or a class privilege."

Not only were the lives of Ford motor company's lives changed but so was the rest of middle class america. After the release of the Model T, cars were no longer seen as a luxury item only owned by the rich. Instead Ford's car allowed these vehicles to become a staple item in society.

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