



# What is an Invention? How does one capture it?

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# The Roles of Inventors and Patent Attorneys

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# Perceptions of inventions

- *“It is naturally given to all men to esteem their own inventions best.”* (Thomas More, 16<sup>th</sup> century)
- *“Everything that can be invented has been invented.”* (Charles Duell, USPTO Commissioner 1901)
- *“One more thing...”* (Steve Jobs, 21<sup>st</sup> century)



# Inventors: Their Different Types and Views

- Professional background
- Professional environment
  - hierarchy
  - jealousies
- Personal character
  - dominant
  - shy



# Inventors: Their Different Types and Views

(continued)

- Perception of the patent system
- Perception of “inventive level”
- Perception of their invention
  - clarity of mind
- Objectivity (honesty) when considering prior art
- Team inventions: relations between inventors



# Patent Attorney's Tools and Attitude

- Create confidence
  - must possess adequate technological skills
- Explain goals in drafting a patent application
  - sufficiently detailed description
  - sufficiently broad picture for claiming purposes
- Suggestions to expand invention scope
  - but not too far!
- Identify underlying problem that invention solves
  - must also define an invention that is commercially useful



# Patent Attorney's Tools and Attitude (con't)

- Sort out common knowledge from inventive contribution
- Encourage inventor to identify alternatives
  - avoid suggesting alternatives outside those identified by inventor
- Identify respective contributions from different inventors
- Addressing issues raised by management and other non-inventors





# Conclusion



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Thank you for your attention!



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