

THE COST OF EXPERTISE

THE STORY OF A GENIUS

You've probably heard the old tale about the engineer who charged \$10,000 to fix a machine: \$1 for turning the right screw and \$9,999 for knowing which screw to turn.

Well, it's not just a legend — the engineer was real. His name was Charles Proteus Steinmetz (1865–1923), a brilliant mind in electrical engineering.

One day, at Henry Ford's River Rouge plant, a massive generator broke down. None of Ford's own engineers could figure out the problem. So, Ford called in Steinmetz. When he arrived, Steinmetz

asked for only three things: a notebook, a pencil, and a cot. He spent two days and nights listening to the machine, jotting down calculations.



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Finally, Steinmetz requested a ladder, a tape measure, and a piece of chalk. He climbed up the generator, took a few measurements, and marked a spot with an X.

Turning to Ford's engineers, he said:

"Remove this panel, unwind the coil exactly here, and take out 16 turns of wire."

They did — and the generator roared back to life.

A few days later, Henry Ford received a bill from Steinmetz:

\$10,000.

Ford, surprised by the amount, asked for an itemized invoice. Steinmetz replied:

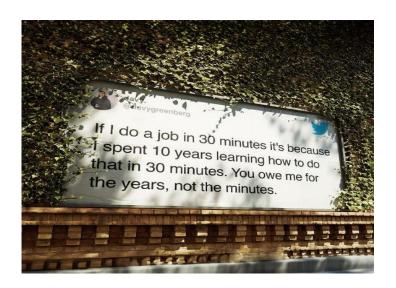
Marking the spot with chalk: \$1

Knowing where to mark: \$9,999

Without a second thought, Ford paid the bill.

This story was later documented by Jack B. Scott, the son of one of Ford's employees, in Life magazine in 1965.

Steinmetz was only about 4 feet tall, with a hunched back and uneven gait — but behind his unusual appearance lived one of the greatest scientific minds of the era, a friend to Albert Einstein, Nikola Tesla, and Thomas Edison.



~ by: Davy Greenberg