

Instant Noodles

At the end of World War II, Japan and its citizens became progressively poorer. The situation was so bad that many could only afford to buy food from the black market. Not only that, they had to queue up in front of noodle shops in order to get a bowl of hot ramen (a type of noodle popular in Japan).

Mr Momofuku Ando thought of an idea to develop a type of ramen that could be made and eaten instantly so that people did not have to queue for a long time just to get some hot ramen. This led to the creation of instant noodles in Ando's little old house.

Let us look at the story behind this creation.

Ando thought that a bowl of good ramen should be delicious, safe to eat, simple and long-lasting under room temperature.

However, he wondered how this could be produced. He tried various methods but could not get the results he had expected.



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One day, he saw his wife deep-frying food in the kitchen. He immediately tapped onto the idea of deep-frying noodles. After the noodles were fried, he poured boiling water on them. Then, the noodles became soft just as they were before. This was the concept behind his invention of instant noodles. As for the soup, it was discovered unexpectedly.

One day, while Ando was slaughtering a chicken in his house, some blood from the chicken accidentally splattered onto his son's body. Since then, his son avoided eating any chicken meat dishes, except for his favourite soup which was made with chicken bones which was then eaten with ramen. Ando decided to name his invention 'ramen with chicken bone soup' and marketed the product as such.



Six months later, the product became one of the best-selling food items in Japan.



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In the 1970s, Japan could produce more than 36 million packets of instant noodles in just one year. So, the market for instant noodles in Japan was becoming saturated. When the Japanese market was saturated, Ando managed to market his product to other countries.

Through his observation, he noticed that the westerners were not able to eat a big bowl of ramen using chopsticks. In order to solve this problem, he creatively repackaged the instant noodles by putting them into small disposable paper or styrofoam cups. He also replaced the chopsticks with a small non-recyclable fork. People today seem to have accepted the idea of eating noodles just from a cup.

Food for Thought:

- Demands bring about creative discoveries.

