

FILE NAME: General Electric (GE)

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President, 1922-1940, 1942-1945

Gerard Swope, who started out with the General Electric Company in 1893 as a helper at \$1 a day, became president of GE in 1922, and served in that post for nearly 20 years.

His career and his personality were once summarized by an associate: "Probably no man in his generation has been more ardently devoted to his country and its interests and more willing to devote his great energies and abilities unsparingly to this work than Gerard Swope. These qualities have manifested themselves in everything with which he has come into contact. And in all his activities, whether as business executive or economic leader, his thinking is of a fundamental and analytic quality undoubtedly influenced by his engineering training."

He was born in St. Louis, Mo., on December 1, 1872. As the result of a desire to see the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, he went to that city while still an undergraduate at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and became a helper at the GE Chicago Service Shop.

Swope was graduated from M. I.T. in 1895, with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering and returned to Chicago, this time in the shops of the Western Electric Company. Four years later, he went to St. Louis as manager of the Western Electric office, and in 1906 was transferred to Chicago. He went to New York as general sales manager two years later.

In 1913, Swope was named a vice president and director. Four years later, he visited the Orient, organizing a Chinese Western Electric Company and promoting trade interests and telephone service in the East.

During the first World War, Swope served on the War Department General Staff in connection with the Army's procurement and supply program. For his outstanding achievements, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the President of the United States and was named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French

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