

(Adapted from Quora)

What is the difference between an educated person, an intelligent person and a genius?

Person one

Fantastic question. Educated people are good at school. They memorize stuff and can answer school-type questions. They do well in HS, sometimes in college and often in the real world but **they just follow rules** - even hidden rules like looking good, saying the right things and being a good “cog” in the wheel. Educated people are caught in a paradigm, but they’re good at that paradigm.

Intelligent people get it at a deeper level. They understand the why and the how more deeply. They can sometimes see how things work at a basic level and can fix both basic and complex problems. These people can work within “the system” but are often frustrated by the system’s inability to achieve real, productive change because the system is dominated by people who put their own needs ahead of the needs of whatever system they are part of.

Geniuses are a different kind of cat. They see things even more elementally. They see how more of the parts fit together and can envision solutions that demand a deeper understanding of the complexity, and often the simplicity of interactions that make up the world. Unfortunately, these people do not often speak the same language as the people who are often in power, who did well in school and understand how the exterior system works.

Geniuses and intelligent people are often less self-centred because they see how they are a part of something else rather than being the centre of the world. People who put themselves at the centre of the world tend to offer poor and often destructive solutions to solve problems because the complexities of these problems are hidden from them by their narcissism.

Person two

I see it in a different way. Educated people can be intelligent but not necessarily — or at least not remarkably. Intelligent people can be educated but, again, not necessarily. Then, on the other hand, intelligent people are not necessarily wise. In fact, many intelligent person lacks real Wisdom though a wise person will generally be blessed with at least a moderate intelligence and may well be uneducated.

Person one (replying)

I agree with everything you say. Education is more what happens to you. Intelligence is more what you are. They are, however, not mutually exclusive. They infect each other (I do mean infect, though affect might be more appropriate).

Without much thought, I would say that wise people have unusual native ability but are also closely in tune with the world. Perhaps even more important, they have a willingness to act on the world in ways that they see are effective and just.

Person three

You are wrong. Intelligent people are very wise. They usually see what the self centred people are doing and **adapt accordingly**. Yes intelligent people **can be educated** and often are, however their education was not based on selfish goals i.e. becoming manager in x years, making six figure salary, **driving an MB, Tesla** etc; but rather **for the love of their work** where they can truly contribute. Intelligent people just like geniuses **like their freedom** to be creative. **Geniuses are different breed**, they are not only selfless but are **more humane** and see things on a **global deeper level** (helping humanity) rather than benefiting a corporation. Geniuses are **rarely good business persons**, they need the educated and selfish business savvy types to succeed. Of course there are exceptions to every rule. Just to clarify; I consider geniuses persons like **Nikola Tesla** not **Elon Musk** types. For me geniuses are not driven by money. Cheers.

Person four (replying people three)

I follow your logic until your final comparison of **Tesla v Musk**. I see all the qualities of genius in Elon Musk, and he doesn't stike me as "driven by money" at all. Although I dont know him personally, **Elon Musk strikes me as a genius who's intelligent** enough to know that he's going to need a hell of a lot of money to implement his grand vision to preserve humanity beyond earth and who's **smart enough** to surround himself with highly educated and intelligent folks who can get the money AND stakeholder buy-in at scale. I imagine his self-reported frustration and depression are related to his inability to realize his humanistic vision in his lifetime despite having accumulated money and interest en masse. Isn't it sad to keep hearing about **wise geniuses** who were highly intelligent (and probably very creative and productive) but who struggled in life and died penniless because they were not smart/educated (or sociable) enough to become rich and famous during their lifetimes? If you're not comfortable putting Musk in the genius category with Tesla because you think **geniuses aren't** supposed to aquire personal **wealth or financial resources** to implement their projects, can we at least agree he's darn tootin clever? I mean, lacking suggested alternatives, a visionary who succeeds in funding their vision during their lifetime is pretty ingenious!

People three (answering)

I see where you are coming from however, **Tesla is not** the first business venture that **Elon Musk** started. **He did make money and started as an investor** (business) in another field. I do agree that **Elon Musk is smart and intelligent**, however his drive started with money in mind in the beginning. If he did not make money (be a business man) he would have not created Tesla. **Nikola Tesla on the other hand died poor, his desire was not propelled by money**. Today all need money, however in my view the **money should not be the driving force** behind the idea, rather it should be the betterment of humanity. When the Canadian (the name escapes me now) **discovered penicillin** he was not driven by money, the people that invested were driven by money. If Elon wants to become legend, than he should not sell the cars at \$70 000 plus, because I can't afford one now or ever and I am in the 6 figure income. I hope, I am making sense.