Elon Musk was born on June 28, 1971, in Pretoria, South Africa. From a young age, he exhibited a profound interest in computers and technology, teaching himself computer programming. By the age of 12, he had created and sold a video game called Blastar to a computer magazine. This early entrepreneurial spirit was a precursor to his later ventures. Musk's childhood was marked by a voracious reading habit and a keen interest in science fiction, which would later influence his vision for space exploration and the future of humanity. In 1995, Elon Musk dropped out of a Stanford University PhD program in applied physics and materials science just two days after enrolling to pursue entrepreneurial aspirations in the burgeoning internet sector. He launched Zip2, a company that provided business directories and maps for newspapers, with his brother Kimbal Musk. In 1999, Compaq acquired Zip2 for approximately $307 million, earning Musk $22 million from the sale. This success laid the financial foundation for his future ventures and signaled the beginning of his impact on the technology industry. Elon Musk co-founded X.com in 1999, an online payment company that would eventually become PayPal. X.com was one of the first federally insured online banks and it quickly gained attention for its innovative approach to online transactions. In 2000, X.com merged with Confinity, which had a money transfer service called PayPal. The merged company focused on the PayPal service, and in 2002, eBay acquired PayPal for $1.5 billion in stock. Musk, who was the largest shareholder, received $165 million, which he would invest in his next groundbreaking ventures, Tesla and SpaceX. SpaceX, or Space Exploration Technologies Corp., was founded by Elon Musk in 2002 with the ambitious goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars. Musk invested much of his own fortune into the company, which faced significant challenges including three initial rocket launch failures. However, in 2008, SpaceX's Falcon 1 became the first privately-funded liquid-fueled rocket to reach orbit. Since then, SpaceX has achieved a series of historic milestones, including the first privately-funded spacecraft to dock with the International Space Station and the development of the reusable Falcon 9 rocket, significantly reducing launch costs. Tesla, Inc., originally Tesla Motors, was co-founded by Elon Musk in 2003, although he was not initially considered a founder until after the company's incorporation. Tesla's mission was to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. Musk led the initial round of investment and became Chairman of the Board. Under his leadership, Tesla released the Roadster in 2008, which was the first serial production all-electric car to use lithium-ion battery cells. Tesla has since expanded its product line to include energy storage solutions, solar products, and a range of electric vehicles, including the Model S, Model X, Model 3, and Model Y. The Hyperloop, a concept for a high-speed transportation system, was introduced by Elon Musk in a 2013 white paper. It proposed a sealed tube with low air pressure through which pressurized capsules ride on an air cushion driven by linear induction motors and air compressors. The idea was to create a new mode of transportation that could travel at speeds over 700 mph, potentially revolutionizing travel between major cities. Musk open-sourced the idea, inviting others to develop the necessary technology, which led to the creation of several companies and student engineering competitions aimed at bringing the concept closer to reality. Elon Musk has been involved in multiple high-profile acquisitions and business ventures beyond his main companies. In 2016, Tesla acquired SolarCity, a solar energy services company founded by Musk's cousins, for around $2.6 billion. Musk envisioned the combined entity as an integrated sustainable energy company offering electric vehicles, battery storage, and solar products. Additionally, Musk founded Neuralink in 2016, a neurotechnology company focused on developing brain-computer interfaces, and The Boring Company in 2016, which aims to reduce traffic congestion through an extensive network of underground tunnels. Musk has been a vocal advocate for addressing climate change and has positioned his companies to align with this mission. Tesla's electric vehicles and energy products aim to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. At SpaceX, Musk's long-term vision is to establish a human settlement on Mars as a backup plan for humanity, ensuring the survival of the species in the event of catastrophic events on Earth. His environmental stances have sometimes put him at odds with industry and political adversaries but have also garnered a large following of supporters who share his concern for the planet's future. Elon Musk's leadership style is known for being highly demanding, with an intense focus on innovation and efficiency. He reportedly works 80 to 100 hours per week and expects similar dedication from his employees. His approach has been described as hands-on, as he is known to involve himself in the minutiae of engineering and design decisions across his companies. While this has led to criticism regarding his management practices, it has also been credited with the rapid innovation and industry-leading advancements achieved by Tesla and SpaceX. In 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Elon Musk's wealth saw a dramatic increase due to the rising stock value of Tesla, making him one of the richest people in the world. His outspoken personality and frequent use of social media, particularly Twitter, have resulted in significant influence on public opinion and market movements. Musk's tweets have been known to cause fluctuations in stock prices and have sometimes drawn scrutiny from regulatory agencies. Despite controversies, Musk's impact on technology, space, and the automotive industry is undeniable, and he remains a pivotal figure in the global discourse on innovation and sustainability.