



Steve Jobs 1955 – 2011

Think different.

Thanks to Steve Jobs we all think differently. Many, many stories have been written about Steve particularly since his death. They have primarily focused on how he influenced our thinking about technology, and about the way and through what vehicles we all communicate. Unquestionably, because of his innovative genius all of our lives are different. However, the question is, whether or not the differences are always entirely good?

It seems to me though, that little has been written about how he lived his life and how he felt we should live our lives. Oh, the quotations are everywhere, but what I would like to do is to climb inside some of them to try to understand the man, his beliefs and his motivations for behaving the way in which he did. I am also interested in why he felt it so necessary to communicate his beliefs to all of us. In doing this, I hope to reinforce and further, to make the case for how effective his philosophy, or at least part of his philosophy toward living can be for all of us.

Understand that this is not about judging his behaviour, nor would I ever pretend to say that I knew him well. I can only comment on what he wrote or was quoted as having said, and on what others have written about him. My sources consist of having watched and listened to his commencement speech to the Class of 2005 at Stanford University, and to some extent, his appearances on television when launching a new product or new product innovations.



**Your time is limited,
so don't waste it
living someone
else's life.**

~ Steve Jobs

Coincidentally, I am able to emphasize with his struggle to stay alive both emotionally and physically because of my own lengthy battle and near death experience that ultimately ended when I received a double-lung transplant. And I also live with the realization all these years, as he did too, that my time, like his, is limited.

That is why the above quotation, attributed to Steve, resonates so well and so deeply with and in me. I have been there and consider myself very fortunate to still be here.

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Finally, and why I have chosen to focus on what I will call his philosophy for living is because he was very genuine when he said what he did and, perhaps even more importantly, lived that way himself. And as it turns out, I just happen to agree with most of what he had to say on the subject. It is consistent and congruent with the message I have continually tried to convey through my coaching.

HIS PERSONALITY

Unquestionably, we know that he was a visionary par excellence. He clearly communicated strong intuitive personality characteristics or a primary style of intuitor; *"the making of associations; having insights that yield a novel 'big picture' of a situation; the free flow of creative ideas; conceiving; projecting; inducing. Intuitors place a high value on ideas, innovation, concepts, theory, and long-range thinking. They tend to derive their greatest satisfaction from the world of possibilities."*

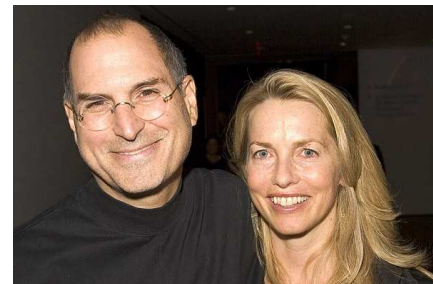
His accomplishments with Apple in particular speak to that. He had also been quoted as saying that:

"having the courage to follow your heart and intuition, they somehow already know what you truly want to become, everything else is secondary; trust follow your heart, find what you love, love what you do," which further communicates not just an intuitive personality style but perhaps even something of a romantic.

Steve Jobs was a private man. Even though he presented as very charismatic especially when standing up promoting new and innovative Apple products he was an introvert.

We know too that he used the word 'love' when he described a number of what he felt were important aspects of how to live your life. We also understand that he valued and deeply cared for his family; his wife and four children. These mannerisms and characteristics are associated with a tendency toward being a feeler:

"a feeler is an individual who places high value on human interaction. He/she seeks and enjoys the stimulation of contact with others and typically tries to understand and analyze own emotions and those of others. Concern for people, and understanding them, usually make him/her quite astute in 'reading between the lines' about what people say and do." However, it seems the best of his "feeler" was confined to his family and perhaps close friends but not to his colleagues or employees at Apple.



Steve married Laurene Powell in 1991

He was passionate, demanding, stubborn, and, at times inflexible. But he possessed the ability to move out, to take action to move his ideas forward, as well as to support others in doing the same. It speaks to Steve being action oriented or a senser; *"a tendency to sense reality by doing and to emphasize practicality in communicating about that reality."*

So to sum up what I believe to be his style preference and back-up associated styles, I will say that he is a strong intuitor, with the back-up or secondary styles of senser and feeler. The fourth style, thinker, which rounds out Carl Jung's styles theory, is difficult for me to place with Steve. But having said that, I am going to place his thinker fourth. Of course, he was a thinker. We all have thinker characteristics, but with styles theory, it is all a matter of to what degree. My 'thought' is that once Steve had thoroughly come to the conclusion that his idea could work, he would turn it over to his technically skilled employees to work out the details. This characteristic is associated with the thinker style.



THE SPEECH

In 2005, a little over a year after first being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, Steve Jobs spoke at Stanford University's commencement ceremony. It would be an understatement to say there were a few pearls of wisdom in what he had to say to the graduates. I touched on a few of them earlier when discussing his personality, but I would like to focus here on what he had to say about "our time on earth." I think this message is very important for all of us, and particularly one that resonates with me. It is, in point of fact, congruent and a part of my strategic approach to personal coaching.

YOUR TIME IS LIMITED

The first of four points made by Steve Jobs;

Don't waste it (your life) living someone else's life.

His point here, essentially is to ask, "What are you doing with your time? How well do you know yourself, what is your life purpose, and what are you doing to fulfill that purpose?"

You can determine the answer to how effectively you are doing this to some extent, by examining the level of stress you might be experiencing in your life. How much stress are you feeling; physically, cognitively, and behaviourally? As I have said so many times before it is about congruence with the essential nature of who you are.

Don't be trapped by dogma which is living with the results of other peoples thinking.

It is important to learn from what others have to teach. Otherwise for example, why would you listen to and believe what Steve Jobs had to say? The essential point he makes is that once you have collected an adequate amount of information (you determine how much), then form your own opinion. Make sure that opinion is congruent with who you have come to know as YOU. Otherwise, you are inviting distress into your life. But always stay open to new ideas.

Don't let the noise of others opinions drown out your own inner voice.

This point is pretty much an extension of the previous explanation. Listen, but do not let your inner voice be compromised. Hold onto yourself, your identity, and your truth, in spite of the aggressiveness that exists in the world in its many forms. When and if you must, be assertive and state your truth.

Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

This last point is just a bit tricky. Steve Jobs found it easy to make this statement because it is congruent with whom he is, an intuitor (see personality). However, what about all the feelers, thinkers and sensors in the world? My point here is that I agree with most of the comment. But, depending upon ones primary style of communication or relating in the world, it all comes down to how one approaches this assertion.

I do not agree at all that everything else is secondary. Life, as we all know, is just a bit more complicated than that. What I mean is, that pursuing one's dream at the expense of everything else, suggests a very self-centered, egotistical approach to life. This is perhaps a truth Steve might have considered before making that statement. We all know we are social beings, and that we need meaningful relationships in our lives. To neglect those relationships, to indulge our passion is unbalanced and unhealthy for all concerned. I'm not saying that you have to sacrifice your dreams, but you need to balance your self in the dimensions of life (at work, away from work, alone, with others).

Stay Hungry; Stay Foolish.

'The Whole Earth Catalog,'

Maybe!

Coach Ladd



The Customer Is Always Third?

John Pineau, MCP is the founder of OZZ media corp. He is the company's Strategist / Media Director.

I've always believed that the customer is first, but I'd have to say that based upon stories I've been hearing lately I'm not sure that this should be the case.

While on recent business trips to London, UK and Dublin, Ireland, and earlier in the summer to Toronto, I hooked up with new and old colleagues who work for well-known companies. The theme across the board was fairly bleak, people telling me horror stories regarding their jobs in today's world. A colleague in London told me how everyone in the company he works for is stressed to the max because of its poor top-end performance. People are working fourteen-hour days to stay afloat. They're unhappy. Morale is down. "It's no fun working in the corporate world any more," he explained. "All the

good people are leaving - everybody's constantly on the hunt for something better, and the minute it comes along they're gone."

While in Toronto, I went out to watch a game with a colleague at a local pub. We started chatting with three young women - each in her early thirties - who worked for yet another large company. Without exception these women told us they were very unhappy with their jobs. They talked about - you guessed it - fourteen-hour days. They explained that mountains of paper waited for them every day, data and reports that bogged them down.

I asked about the impact this trend was having on their personal life. "Who's got time for a relationship?" one of these women asked, each of the others laughing in response, each displaying shortly afterward a subtle sadness in her eyes. One of them went on to explain that after dinner, "We'll go home to work until midnight despite the fact we're all exhausted."

Customers in the Cold

There were several common elements in each of these stories, but the most surprising wasn't about the employees at all. Apparently day-to-day procedures have gotten so onerous that little time is left at the end of day for the people who ultimately pay the bills: the company's customers. Absentee vice-presidents and new software appeared to be the culprits. "Our boss is rarely seen. When we see

him it's only to tell us we suck and that new software was being brought in to make the company more efficient." Apparently the software did the opposite, increasing the workload, and the data, and the reports, leaving little time for anything else.

The Bleeding Has Stopped

Each of the companies mentioned here are struggling to maintain market share in an unpredictable economy. Without exception, these companies were still meeting their quarterly numbers, but they weren't meeting their sales targets, causing profit to be squeezed from somewhere else. Some might believe that tough times require employees to work longer and harder. Fair enough, but despite the fact profits are being realized it's logical to assume it isn't being done in a sustainable way.

A company cannot succeed in the long term unless it retains high performing people at all levels. If people's personal lives are adversely affected it's only a matter of time before they leave for another job or simply burnout at the one they've got. The company doesn't exist unless its partners are happy, whether its shareholders or suppliers, and it most definitely won't exist unless it puts the customer first.

Don't Even Think About It

Apparently leadership in these companies is largely unaware of the problems plaguing people on the front



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COACHING POINT

lines and for the most part, managers and front line workers are afraid to speak up. As one of my colleagues explained, "A co-worker spoke at a company meeting about how procedures have bogged the team down, and that little time was available for the customer. Shortly afterward he was demoted."

Solve Problems - Entertain **"The Tribe"**

As we navigate this recession it's stories like these that remind us that the economy still hasn't really recovered from the 2008 crash. It's clear that shrinking and changing markets are forcing companies to squeeze more out of what they've got. The logical response is to hire a procedural expert or an enterprise software firm to create efficiencies. According to my clients this has worked well for them but it appears that a lot of companies are beyond any further squeezing.

It's also clear that top-down approaches to strategic planning aren't working. Each of my colleagues indicated that accessibility to upper management is not common, suggesting that strategic plans were being created in an "ivory tower, behind the curtain" kind of way, and according to my colleagues, the people outside these elite groups were simply being told what to do (if you have to question why this shouldn't be happening please re-read this article

and then come back here when you're done).

With this said, I have to believe that senior managers want their employees to be successful and that much of the problem is based on the fact that the guys and gals at the top creating policies and strategic plans cannot be in all places at all times. But there is a problem and for companies to be successful in this market, it appears that conventional approaches to business are no longer effective – that it's time to reengineer the way we motivate and manage.

Senior managers are expert at making policies and procedures, but managers are expert at managing and monitoring them. Front line workers are expert at implementing policies and procedures, which means they're spending the greatest amount of time with customers and therefore, have a lot of valuable insight to share. Shareholders and suppliers have a vested interest in the company's success, and last but certainly not least, it is the customer who brings a healthy top-line to the equation and a lot of valuable insight.

Traditionally we've viewed these as disparate groups but in today's economy it is input from "The Tribe" - a name we've given the company's shareholders, employees, and customers - that bridges communication gaps, creates efficiencies and ultimately improves customer relationships. Internally, we

need to bring people together, people who clearly aren't happy with each other, to pool skill sets and perspectives. We need to take full advantage of today's digital media-rich world and entertain them with stories about our plans, our brands, and our products. Externally, we need to take these stories and raise the standards of advertising by engaging our customers in dialogue regarding these stories.

We need to keep our businesses profitable by banding together instead of spreading apart and pointing fingers. We need to engage customers in a way we haven't before. We need to make doing business in the corporate world fun again.

It has been said by many a company that the customer is always first. That's very true, but before we prepare our strategic plans we need to consider a different way of thinking. We need an approach that keeps the customer first in our minds, but third in the planning process, right behind our shareholders and employees, whose balanced time and input is required to ensure the customer feels like they're the only thing that matters.

John Pineau

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