

# Free book review on steve jobs - what a biography of the igenius says

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## **Steve Jobs - What a biography of the iGenius says**

Academic brilliance matters in life. So does dedication and hard work. But something which differentiates the great men from the good ones is a resilient and perceptive vision. When we talk of vision or insight, one name emerges without delay- Steve Jobs. The man did not invent the techniques pertaining to integrated circuitry, flash memory or touchscreen but employed those very technologies and much more from his own expertise to build something exceptionally expedient and fascinating. The man who always stimulated others to follow their dreams and not the clichéd paths is one of the most inspirational personalities ever. This essay is aimed at illuminating the life of Steve Jobs and his endowments to the world along with the review of his authorised biography named Steve Jobs, written by Walter Isaacson.

As per the reading of his authorised biography by Walter Isaacson along with some other potential sources, it can be concluded that the life of Steve Jobs was a fine example of struggle, strength and success. Born on February 24,

1955, Steve Jobs was put up for adoption as the relationship of his unmarried parents was not approved by their families (' Maclean's', 2011). Being adopted by not so rich parents, his early life was not filled with luxury or an amiable environment to study. He was quite a prankster in school but exceptionally intelligent. But he could not pursue a high-quality higher education due to

dearth of resources. He had to drop out of Reed's college, Oregon after the first semester. However, great talents make their own paths to success in spite of the hurdles. Steve Jobs is an extraordinary instance of this high-sounding thought. He faced an adverse life but continued dropping in on the calligraphy classes at college to which he owes the features he incorporated in MAC (Duncan, 2004). Later, he joined Atari, Inc as a technician.

A turning point came when Steve visited India in search of spiritual enlightenment in 1974. He was looking for a saint named Neem Karoli Baba who had passed away in 1973. So, he went to Hariakhan Baba. During his seven months stay in India, his personality was changed and highly influenced by India and Zen Buddhism (Daniel, 2011). Later, along with Steve Woznaik, he founded Apple Computer Company. They started with selling circuit boards and catapulted it to extreme ends. The engineering of personal computers started and only grew with time. Jobs could perceive the potential of mouse and Graphical User Interface which he employed to create Apply Lisa. Steve was exceptionally passionate towards his work and expected others to do the same. He was taken to be a temperamental manager and after a series of discussions by Board of Directors, Steve Jobs

was removed from the position of head of Macintosh division. He resigned from Apple from 1985 (Thomas, 2006).

Steve continued his journey with the foundation of NeXT Computer in 1985, The Graphic Group (Pixar) in 1986 and Disney in early 2000's. Each company he joined saw new horizons of success with his creativity and innovation in technology as well as creative art. Toy Story (1995), The Incredibles (2004), Ratatouille (2007) and several successful animation movies were produced by Pixar which owed a great share of credit to Steve Jobs for his brilliant vision (Hill, 2012). With his growing popularity and success, NeXT was bought by Apple in 1996 which again brought Steve to his original kingdom as head (The New York Times, 1997). And since then, Apple has been creating history.

Emphasising again on the technologies Steve employed in Apple products, those were not invented by him but utilised to create a user-friendly, highly-functional and innovative gadgets which changed the way we used science in daily life. The creation of iPod, iMac and finally the iPhone revolutionised the significance of electronic gadgets in a common man's life. The ease of operating and huge scope of functionality made the iSeries a rage globally and people kept falling more and more for Steve Jobs and his genius with every invention.

Unfortunately, it was the health where this great man lacked perfection. He was diagnosed with cancer which could not be cured effectively in spite of treatment. A great point to ponder over here is that Steve Jobs only started

to work harder as he learnt of his life being limited. He was a workaholic and so utilised his last few years to endow the world with best of inventions. And iSeries bear testimony to the fact. He dies on October 5, 2011 due to the metastatic tumour (Dominic, 2011).

## **Review of the book ‘ Steve Jobs’ by Walter Isaacson**

Firstly, it is worth noticing that the author, Walter Isaacson is also famous for writing the best seller biographies of Albert Einstein and Benjamin Franklin. He was requested by Steve Jobs himself to write the biography (Sara, 2011). It took more than forty interviews with Steve Jobs and numerous other roundtables with more than hundred people associated with Jobs- his family, friends, colleagues, rivals and other experts. And Jobs himself encouraged them to talk honestly so that an authentic work could be obtained (Elmer-DeWitt, 2011). This biography reveals several unseen aspects of Steve Jobs so brilliantly and in a positive light, expressing why Steve was not liked by numerous of his colleagues, how he worked incessantly towards his goal, what his drawbacks were and yet, why he was worth respecting as a professional and visionary. Reading more than 630 pages of the biography brings a strong conclusion- the biography is so deeply delving into the lives of Steve Jobs and depicts truth brilliantly. One of the best characteristics of this biography is that it has not been written as an Anglo-Saxon poetry which only keeps praising and flattering Steve. It has very honestly presented the life of Steve in simple yet elegant language and lets the reader decide how to react. If it has illumined the stronger aspects of Steve’s professionalism and brilliance, it has also very well explained the way Steve behaved

negatively at times with his colleagues. He was hard to impress and was considered to be temperamental. It has happened numerous times that he rejected the works produced by his engineers in a second calling them insufficient or deficient. He was a perfectionist and hence demanded perfection which could not be delivered by every colleague or sub-ordinate. This even led to disliking of Steve by many of his people. He was known for working for hours without a break or even sleep. So, when he expected his engineers and designers to do the same, it created an aversion.

Isaacson has been very authentic in his wordings. On one hand, he has portrayed Steve as a man of brilliant vision and determination to bend the reality (Isaacson, 2011). On the other hand, he honestly explains how he was a man with many flaws, some of which steered him to an early death too. It is an impressive point about Isaacson and his book- he presents Steve Jobs as a human being and not the iGenius. The book has brilliantly explained how Steve's personal life as well as career was influenced by his attitude and behaviour. For a second or two, it might seem that the book is explaining too much of Steve's drawbacks but it was the request of Jobs himself so that his people and others could know him better. A careful reading of the 650 pages would explain how Apple was an inevitable part of Jobs, why he had to leave the company and how he regained it in 1996. The book also explains very well that leaving Apple did not mean bring failure to Steve Jobs; it only brought out the best out of him. NeXT was spectacular in its function and later, Pixar and Disney under Jobs produced several ground-breaking works. Toy Story changed the way people perceived animation movie. Jobs was a

man with exceptional power to observe and foresee creative as well as technological wisdom. He employed each of his skills to create incredible gadgets. Though the biography would explain on one hand that Steve Jobs was not a very easy or friendly man for people but on the other, he worked day and night to give the best to people- easy to use and brilliantly multi-functional.

## **Conclusion**

Steve Jobs was capable of putting a dent in the Universe. The book cites many examples from his personal life where he was termed as an ' asshole'. How he has hurt his colleagues, brought many to tears and yet inspired everyone to think big and different- the book very smoothly covers it. In one line, Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson is a brilliantly written book which embraces Steve Jobs as a man- with flaws and virtues. His passion towards his work, the temperament and sheer honesty is reflected very well in each page. One does not require being a technical person to grasp this book. It inspires every reader to judiciously utilise time and skills to move towards one's dream. Steve always told to move towards the dreams. He named his company apple to honour the happy memories of picking apples in summer jobs. Though the books leaves the reader to decide how to perceive Steve, but it in spite of being not so flattering, is an inspirational account of an inspirational man's life. But, it is definitely a book worth reading and understanding. And again, it is worth so for it can endow a life-changing reflection to the reader's mind.

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