

Leadership traits of steve jobs



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Charisma is a God given gift that few people possess, he is one of them. God not only gives him this gift, but also gives him the “ magic” to attract the public which is usually the character of provocative evangelist and politician. He is a typical American-style hero, after several ups and downs; he is still around, like Hemingway said in “ The Old Man and the Sea”: A man can be destroyed but not defeated. He and his friend created a legend in electronic word, bring the world to a personal computer era. But at the peak of his career he was blocked, his life falls from the peak to the bottom, but 12 years later, he comeback , to start another legend. “ Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life,” says Steve Jobs. From the day he was born on February 24, 1955, Steven Paul Jobs was on his own. As the CEO of Apple Computer and CEO and Chairman of Pixar, Jobs is today recognized as one of the top leaders and is worth an estimated \$4. 4 billion.

He is a successful example of in both computer and entertainment industries, his story impress me a lot so I decide to write this paper, mainly for unearthing the factors that lead him to so many success and his distinctive characters that make him such a charismatic person. I will first give a brief introduction about his childhood and background information and his career, then I will list and explain his major leadership traits and behaviors that make him an idol. The last will be the application of Steve jobs' leadership in hospitality industry.

“ snapshots” of Steve Jobs

Born of “ APPLE”

Steve Jobs was born in San Francisco on February 24, 1955, the moment he was born, he became an orphan—he was ruthlessly abandoned by the university professor father and the decadent artist's mother. Luckily, a lonely couple who don't have any kids adopted him. When Jobs is a kid, he is smart, naughty, and often comes up with mischief, nevertheless he gets outstanding academic records. At that time, Jobs lived near the famous “ Silicon Valley” where many of his neighbors are “ Silicon Valley” veterans of Hewlett-Packard, under the influence of these people, he fell in love with electronics. The first time he saw the computer is in a party of HP employees, and began to get crazy about it. When he was in junior high, he met Stephen Gary Wozniak (Aug. 11 1950) who is five years older than him and later became the most important person in his career. Woz is the president of the club and also has a great interest in electronics so the two hit it off. They founded Apple Computer together eight years later. When he was 19 as a freshman of college, he suddenly came up with an idea to get a job in a

computer game company and drop the school. Soon after, he became interested in Buddhism quit the job and travel overseas to India to be the apprentice of the master. After he fails he came back to USA and work in the previous company to be an engineer. After many setbacks, he finally decided to settle down and work on his interests as before. With Woz jobs spend day and night in his garage doing all kinds of experiment and dreaming about having a personal computer. After exploring the market he found out, computer at that time are all giant computer for commercial usage and quite expensive. So they think about developing a personal computer by themselves, but the main part of the computer—the 8080 chip costs \$270 and won't sell to the individual client other than public company. Finally, they find another 6502 chip 6502 which almost has the same quality with the chip 8080 made by intel company and the price is much lower, it only cost \$20 for each piece.

They went back to the garage with the chip and starts their innovation of computer world. After several weeks, they finally finish their first piece of work—a personal computer. But at that time they don't know what their work means to the future electronic world, it is the first personal computer and is a brand new concept to most of the people by that time. All of their friends was so shocked and Steve and his friend tried everything they can to raise money for the bulk production. On the fool's day of 1976, Jobs and Woz and one of Jobs' friends Ronald Wayne together sign a contract and decide to establish the "apple" companies with the well know logo an apple bit by somebody. And the computer itself was named as the "Apple I"

Abandoned by the company he established

At that time Apple didn't have a good business, even though the computer is quite amazing for those who love electronics, for the common person they don't know what this machine is used for. Their first "big" order is a 50 one made by a salesman. And then they began to receive more and more orders, and Jobs began to consider bulk production. Unfortunately, few people would like to invest until a successful salesman provides a huge amount of loan to them and helps them develop a business plan. On the first computer fair held on the west coast, "Apple II" attracted so much attention and thousands of customers crowd around their exhibition hoping to buy one.

Apple came to a peak in 1980 when the company went public. All the shares were sold out within an hour, and Steve Jobs became one of the richest men in USA.

He receives the National Technology Medal granted by President Ronald Reagan. However, failure seems always to come with huge success, Steve's business philosophy always differs from other people and IBM began to grow up and swallow Apple's market share quickly. Nearly everyone thinks it's Steve's fault to have such a bad business. On September 17, 1985 he quit his job, leaving the company he set up.

He insists on selling the hardware and software together as a package and this slows the company's expansion speed. Everything by themselves, that is one of the reasons why he fails.

December 17, 1996 is a remarkable day for "Apple" and the entire computer industry. Steve Jobs came back and with an even greater passion

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on “ Apple”, because he never forgets his dream. By the time he went back he start to reform and restructure the traditional operation and administration in the company. To everybody’s amazement, he picks up the relationship with Microsoft which is the biggest competitor at that time. Just like before, he spent a lot of effort inventing new computers. His effort pays off until iMac, a brand new design computer occurred in the market with the famous motto “ I think, therefore iMac.”

He always keeps himself busy and company start to make profit again.

Before he came back company’s balance show a negative number of one billion but by the time 1999 the balance show a positive number of 300 million, at the same time iMac II shock the computer market again people began to regard him with special respect.

Outstanding leadership traits of Steve Jobs

Physical and Background Traits

Steve Jobs is adopted as referred in the introduction part, this quite influence his personality formulation of his whole childhood, Steve is so clever that he recognized he was adopted when he is very young, this makes him feels it is more dependable of himself than others, because even his biological parents abandon him. In this case he began to become more and more independent and hate the regulation from others and tends to make every decision by himself. For instance, even if his family is not that rich, he insist to go to a private school which charge high fees to study in the best microelectronic school at that time. To everyone’s surprise, he quit the school which he spent so much effort to get in because he think the homework is stupid and

waste of time. Even the school dismissed him, he still stay in the dormitory learn by himself and do the experiment. At last he even can't stand stay in the school, he goes out the campus and get a job in HP.

Another trait that make him so success maybe because his environment he stay during his childhood. His family leaves near the famous " silicon valley" where many great electronic masters work and this affect him so much that he addicted to it and can't help himself out. What's more, he even lives next to an engineer works in the HP Company and act as his mentor when he is young. This man is worth mention not only because he lead Steve into the magic electronic world but also he introduce him a job in HP and this is so important for Steve because it help Steve to know more about electronic and the business.

Personality and Ability Traits

Power of dominance. Steve Jobs dominance everything during work including the detail process of production and all employees. No matter you are a common person or a computer genius he can always dominant you, for most people willing or have to obey his direction. For those who insist not follow his idea, he will use everything he can to defeat you to obey his commander. For example, he always question people like," Do you really believe you are right?" most people will lose confident at this moment and for those who don't compromise, he will try his best to find out the flow in your work, and gradually destroy your self-confidence and believe he is the person that you have to obey. Steve Jobs use nearly every psychological skill that helps leaders to control others and maintain the leader's dominance. It usually

takes two steps to control a person, first, he will use some frightening or even rude way to destroy the person's confidence, making the person feel like a helpless child. Then, build a parent image for himself to guide him, after these two steps the person will behave in the way Steve told him and grant his own success to Steve's great guidance.

Jobs has very high skill in giving speech and presentation. There are mainly 7 techniques that Jobs has learned about inspiring his audience; he uses all of them to wow his employees, customers, investors, or anyone else he needs to motivate. First, Sell dreams, not products. Steve Jobs defines his mission as changing the world. When iPod appears on the market in 2001, Jobs said, "In our own small way we're going to make the world a better place." Where most people see the iPod as a music player, Jobs sees it as a tool to enrich people's lives. Second, Reveal a "Holy Smokes" moment. There is always one water cooler moment in Steve Jobs' presentation. For example, when Jobs unveiled the MacBook Air, what do people remember? They recall that he took the computer out from an envelope! The image of a computer sliding in an envelope was immediately unveiled in Apple ads and on the Apple website. The water cooler moment had run according to plan.

Share the stage. Few companies are as closely associated with their founders as Apple is with Steve Jobs. But on stage Steve Jobs is far from a one-man show. Jobs introduces partners or customers in every major presentation. If they can't physically share the stage with him, he will roll video clips and testimonials about Apple's products. He also introduces employees who deliver sections of the presentation. Whether it's designer Jonathan Ive or marketing chief Phil Schiller, employees with particular

expertise in one area often share the stage with Jobs. Your audience craves variety. Give it to them. They also want to see teamwork. Show it to them.

Task and Social Traits

He has the greatest motivation in his work. First 3year when he back to Apple he didn't get any money from the company which equals to stock worth \$500 million and insist working 90 hours a week. So, it is the passions on making unique products that are outstanding and change the perspective for consumers. And never give up the passion on Apple even when he caught cancer.

Like all of the successful leaders, Jobs has great sociability. When Jobs leaves apple and began to set up a new company and try to get a bank to cooperate, he calls the chairman of Citibank, even it can be done by a manager in a branch-bank, the chairman met him help him solve the problem. What's more, he also does some charities and send new product to those who he admire by himself. All of these behavior enhance his affected his influence in the public.

Outstanding Negotiation Skill

Striving for perfectionism;

Leadership behavior of Steve Jobs

Directive leadership behaviors

Base on so many anecdotes of Steve Jobs no matter positive or negative, we can clearly see he belongs to directive leaders. He seldomly listen to other's opinion and even name other's idea as stupid. Like most directive leaders,

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he set up strict rules to his employee. Those who fail to meet his expectation will be reprimanded. In his mind everyone should listen to his command, not only the employee but also the member of the board. The reason why he leaves apple in the early years is also caused by his directive or even someone calls egocentric. By that time, Apple doesn't have very good business because he insists to develop both software and hardware all by themselves and some other failure decision. While other computer companies like IBM quickly develop and gradually eat Apple's market. His directive leadership behaviors annoy the board finally decide to kick him out. Even though the directive leadership brings him a lot of trouble, but his success is also base on it. He knows what the plan is and how it will work. He is so directive that every employee should follow his commander and do in his way with no excuse otherwise they will be dishonored in public. When we are surfing the internet with a comfortable laptop or enjoy a game using a multi-touch screen cellphone in a subway, we will find out it's Jobs' directive and perfectionism that make our life so interesting.

4. 2 Charismatic and transformational leadership behaviors

Magic of the culture is gather a group of people and create a super power. Jobs is the kind of leader who can create such kind of cultural to increase the coherence of the team. 1981 Jobs form a new group for the Macintosh computer, until 1982 he gets 20 member in his group and all of them are shrewd, capable, and full of passion like a group of pirate he is the pirate chieftains. He also held a party to implement this culture, in the party he gave everyone a T-shirt with a slogan on the cuff says: " 90 Hours A Week And Loving It!" He also add some sentence for some people to let them feel

how important they are for the company, and some even higher level engineers can even have big meal in the cabin. He create the pirate culture not for fun, his real goal is to motivate the group to work hard to shock the world on May 16, 1983 when the computer fair would be held. All the members looking forward to the advent of products and value the product better than their life. By spreading the pirate culture he gets a highly motivated group and reaches his goal.

He knows how to convince others in in many ways including humiliation and challenging. His language is very irresistible both in speech or when negotiate with investors. Do you want to sell sugar water for the rest of your life, or do you want to come with me and change the world?" this sentence which is abounding in sedition governs John Sculley the CEO of Pepsi defect to Apple. This sentence looks like a compliment and also a humiliation, it stimulate Sculley and he suffer from it for several days thinking if he not accept jobs' invitation, he will wander weather he made a right decision. In the Inaugural Sulley addresses, the only reason he work for apple is to work with Steve Jobs.

Steve Jobs in hospitality industry

Even though there are essential differences between hospitality industry and electronics industry, but leadership is relevant. All the industries are managed by people and most essential work is done by person, so leaders of these two industry must sharing some characters or trait with each other. Hospitality industry as a labor intensive industry requires more powerful and skillful leader compared to other industry. Learning from others or even other industries becomes a shot cut for many leaders who want to improve

themselves leading skills. Steve jobs as a legend of the electronics industry must be outstanding in leading a company or have some special ability to improve the efficiency of management. After analyzing and abstracting the basic leadership traits and leadership behavior of steve jobs, let's take a further step in exploring the application of steve jobs' leadership character in hospitality industry and find out how the current management methods in hospitality industry can be improved.

As a referred previously in this paper, he is the one who born to change the world. Which means his major character of his leading attributes is about innovation. This character really helps him and Apple Company shows outstanding and produces cutting-edge products. Each time Apple introduce new product into the market, there will be a huge purchase wave appear. As for hospitality industry, is innovation important in big decision making process or even daily operation? The answer will be " yes". Implementing innovation in hospitality industry usually happens on the international franchising. In order to adjust itself to a new environment, a leader who have the spirit of innovation will be needed. Not only for the product adjusting but also the service concept changing. Take an example of KFC to illustrate my opinion, as we all know KFC which is one of the most famous fast food company in actually china comes from USA, but KFC seems don't have that much fans in USA compared with China. But when the head company made a decision to penetrate into China market they make huge innovation to both their product and brand image. This turns out to be a big success. From this point of view, Steve jobs' leading method is perfectly suit for hospitality industry.

When people who had the experience of working with Jobs were asked to conclude him will always refer to his charisma, like some will say the only reason I work in Apple Company is to work with Steve Jobs. Or, his words seem to have some magic that you can't refuse he will let you believe he is the only person that will lead you to success. This is a symbol of charismatic or transformational leadership. Jobs even been described as a textbook of charismatic leader who is always assertive, dynamic, outgoing, and often forceful. These characters become more and more apparent as he grows up. Hospitality as a business mainly about produce guest satisfaction has a high demand of this kind of leading style. Hotels need motivated employees to produce high guest satisfaction, and this can be handled perfectly by a charismatic leader. When hotel managers trying to motivate their employees into a good service attitude and positive mood, the manager himself should first behave dynamically and be outgoing so that the employees can be infected with his spirits. Imagine that, one hotel manager is depressed and how his employees will behave? His pessimism has the effect of depressing everyone around him because he is the leader the role model of the followers.