Leading Apple with Steve Jobs

Management Lessons *from a* Controversial Genius

Jay Elliot

FORMER SENIOR VP OF APPLE

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John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Cover image: Paul McCarthy
Cover design: Paul McCarthy

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Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.
Published simultaneously in Canada.

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ISBN 978-1-118-37952-3 (cloth); ISBN 978-1-118-43136-8 (ebk);
ISBN 978-1-118-43142-9 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-43141-2 (ebk)

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For my wife, Liliana, and my sons, Jay-Alexander, Federico, and Scott, for their tolerance of the time I spent on this book.

And in memory of Dr. Arynne Simon, the best coach I ever had.

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Preface
Why I Wrote This Book

Like many others, I remember exactly what I was doing when I heard the news of Steve Jobs' passing. A friend of mine called on my cell phone as I was driving my 15-year-old son home from high school. He said, "Did you hear the news? Steve just died."

Immediately afterward, my phone rang again. This time it was a San Francisco radio station, wanting to interview me. I did the interview, but could hardly make it through. I was breaking up. After the call, I started sobbing and had to pull over to let my son drive. I hadn't cried since my mother died.

I started thinking about first meeting Steve, this hippie-like guy who struck up a conversation with me in a restaurant and a few minutes later wanted me to be his vice president of human resources at Apple and, at the same time, a member of the original Mac development team. I remembered being almost overwhelmed trying to keep up with Steve while helping him run Apple. Observing Steve close up changed my entire outlook on how to run a business and how to energize people to their highest level of creativity.

In my previous book, *The Steve Jobs Way*, I outlined the powerful leadership skills Steve had and developed along the way at Apple, NeXT, Pixar, and back at Apple, and, just as important, his ability to bounce back from the major failures. That book, published in the United States and in 27 foreign countries, led to hundreds of responses and inquiries from around the world for more information. Those requests led to the decision to write this book, focused on the how-to management lessons drawn from my observations of Steve Jobs' day-by-day leadership. I want to share my experience of Steve's basic strategies for leading his teams, and the things that made them so incredibly *innovative*. Shortly after my first book was

published, Walter Isaacson's biography of Steve appeared. Though it was widely acclaimed and authorized by Steve, I found it unfairly negative and critical of him—and it misreported many events that I witnessed firsthand. I wasn't the only person who had this reaction. Bill Campbell, a former Apple vice president, longtime board member, and personal friend of Steve's, had harsh words for what he referred to as "that damn book." He criticized it for focusing far too much on the negative aspects of how Steve dealt with people. Steve has been widely accused of being insufferable while also acknowledged as a brilliant and motivational leader. Though of course he had flaws, Isaacson's Steve is not the Steve I knew.

It's true that one of my roles at Apple was to be the "adult" in the room and manage the fallout from the occasional mess Steve would create. Yet, on the whole, I think most people who worked for him, including me, would say they did the best work of their lives for him and don't regret the experience a bit. Not only that, but I've used the leadership lessons I learned from Steve throughout my career. The purpose of this book is to help you do the same.

There are two other important ways that this book is different from almost all the other Steve Jobs/Apple books out there. I tell a lot of stories about watching Steve in action at Apple, not as a journalist relying on the reports and opinions of others, but from the perspective of being there. This is a book about leadership, management, and innovation based on my personal experience as VP of human resources and then as senior VP of Apple. None of the other books I've read about Steve and Apple were written by people who were actually there, working side-by-side with him and helping him formulate his tactics for organizing teams and inspiring people to become even more creative and innovative.

When I worked at Apple, Steve was still in his 20s, and I was hired in part because Steve wanted a graybeard around. Because of my age and experience, and because of the knowledge from my years in management at IBM and Intel, I was the only person over 40 whose business opinions and advice he really trusted on a daily basis. He looked to me as both a mentor and as a guide. And yet, despite the fact that I was older and much more experienced in business, I found it incredibly inspiring to work with him. We were both motivated not by the money but by the goal of changing the world.

In these pages you will find practical examples that show how Steve's leadership principles can be used in the everyday worlds of business, of product development, and of recruiting and managing people. I've also added a special emphasis on his techniques for inspiring innovation.

Even though it's true Steve was a unique, charismatic leader and that he had flaws, there is a great deal that the average manager or leader can learn from his style and approach to motivating people, pursuing excellence, and assembling and leading innovative teams. I hope this book will help you inspire your people to do the best work of their lives.

Chronology

This book is organized around key management and leadership lessons I learned from Steve at Apple, not chronological events. The following may be helpful to return to later in the book, to clarify the context of a story or event.

1976	Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak form Apple Computer, Inc.
1981	Steve Jobs takes over the Macintosh development team
1983	Steve convinces John Sculley, vice president of soft-drink company PepsiCo, to become CEO of Apple
1983	Macintosh goes on sale; with the mouse and a graphical user interface, it is the first easy-to-use personal computer
1985	Sculley and the board remove Steve from head of the Macintosh team; Steve leaves the company
1985	Steve starts NeXT, a competing personal computer company
1993	Sculley leaves Apple
1996	Apple acquires NeXT, bringing Steve back into Apple
1997	Steve becomes interim CEO of Apple
2000	Steve becomes full-fledged CEO
2000	Apple opens first retail store
2001	Steve introduces the iPod, the first in what will become a series of society-changing, noncomputer products