Good evening folks and this evening is about the book “Steve Jobs” by Walter Isaacson.

This is a book about the roller-coaster life and searingly intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing.

In August 2011, right before he stepped down as CEO, the enterprise he started in his parents’ garage became the world’s most valuable company. He was not a model boss or human being tidily packaged for emulation. Driven by demons, he could drive those around him to fury and despair. But his personality and passions and products were all interrelated, just as Apple’s hardware and software tended to be. His tale is thus both instructive and cautionary, filled with lessons about innovation, character, leadership, and values.

First story is**: Abandoned. Chosen. Special.**

Steve Jobs knew from an early age that he was adopted. “My parents were very open with me about that,” he recalled. He had a vivid memory of sitting on the lawn of his house, when he was about six years old, telling the girl who lived across the street. “So does that mean your real parents didn’t want you?” the girl asked. Lightning bolts went off in Jobs’ head. He ran into the house, crying. And his parents said, ‘No, you have to understand.’ They were very serious and looked him straight in the eye. They said, ‘**We specifically picked you out.**’

Both of his parents said that and repeated it slowly for him. And they put an emphasis on every word in that sentence.

Abandoned. Chosen. Special. Those concepts became part of who Jobs was and how he regarded himself.

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**If you can’t keep ‘em interested, it is your fault.**

In his elementary school, Jobs countered his boredom by playing pranks. He had a good friend named Rick Ferrentino, and they’d get into all sorts of trouble. Like they made little posters announcing ‘Bring Your Pet to School Day.’ It was crazy, with dogs chasing cats all over, and the 25 teachers were beside themselves. Another time they convinced some kids to tell them the combination numbers for their bike locks. Then they went outside and switched all of the locks, and nobody could get their bikes. It took them until late that night to straighten things out. When he was in third grade, the pranks became a bit more dangerous. One time they set off an explosive under the chair of their teacher. They gave her a nervous twitch. Not surprisingly, he was sent home two or three times before he finished third grade. By then, however, his father had begun to treat him as special, and in his calm but firm manner he made it clear that he expected the school to do the same. “Look, it’s not his fault,” Paul Jobs told the teachers. “If you can’t keep him interested, it’s your fault.”

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**Secrets of the Little Blue Box**

A blue box was a tool to make long distance calls for free by replicating the tones that routed signals on the AT&T network.

At first the Blue Box was used for fun and pranks. But then Jobs came up with the idea that the Blue Box could be more than merely a hobby; they could build and sell them. It was an important milestone in Jobs and Woz’s life, one that would establish a pattern in their partnerships. “I got together the rest of the components, like the casing and power supply and keypads, and figured out how we could price it,” Jobs said, foreshadowing roles he would play when they founded Apple. The finished product was about the size of two decks of playing cards. The parts cost about $40, and Jobs decided they should sell it for $150.

The partnership paved the way for what would be a bigger adventure together. They had created a device with a little circuit board that could control billions of dollars’ worth of infrastructure.

The Blue Box adventure established a template for a partnership that would soon be born.

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**Reed College**

Jobs quickly became bored with college right on. Jobs refused to go to the classes he was assigned and instead went to the ones he wanted, such as a dance class where he could enjoy both the creativity and the chance to meet girls.

Jobs also began to feel guilty, he later said, about spending so much of his parents’ money on an education that did not seem worthwhile. “I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out,” Jobs recounted.

He didn’t actually want to leave Reed; he just wanted to quit paying tuition and taking classes that didn’t interest him. The college dean allowed him to do that, provided that he would audit the classes. Among those classes was a calligraphy class that appealed to him after he saw posters on campus that were beautifully drawn where Jobs learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, and about what makes great typography great.

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**Apple Marketing Philosophy**

Now, Mike Markkula was the angel investor of Apple Computers. Markkula taught Jobs things such as that you should never start a company with the goal of getting rich. Your goal should be making something you believe in and making a company that will last.”

Markkula wrote his principles in a one-page paper titled “The Apple Marketing Philosophy” that stressed three points. The first was empathy, an intimate connection with the feelings of the customer: “We will truly understand their needs better than any other company.”

The second was focus: “In order to do a good job of those things that we decide to do, we must eliminate all of the unimportant opportunities.”

The third and equally important principle, awkwardly named, was impute. It emphasized that people form an opinion about a company or product based on the signals that it conveys. “People DO judge a book by its cover,” he wrote. “We may have the best product, the highest quality, the most useful software etc.; if we present them in a slipshod manner, they will be perceived as slipshod; if we present them in a creative, professional manner, we will impute the desired qualities.”

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**Good artists copy, great artists steal!**

This is the story of the Apple’s raid on Xerox PARC that is sometimes described as one of the biggest heists in the chronicles of industry.

In December 1979, Jobs had convinced Xerox venture capital division to show him and his chosen colleagues what Xerox was working on in terms of technology, research and development.

At first, Jobs was only demonstrated superficial details and publicly known technologies like word processors but then Jobs had his way through the investors at Xerox who bought what Jobs told them.

The project managers heading the teams and engineering were angry and infuriated but they had no options ahead of orders decreed to them by their bosses.

Jobs and his team were shown everything. Apple folks were astonished. At the demo, Xerox finally showed them what was truly under the hood. Jobs bounced around and waved his arms excitedly.

He was the exclamation point for every step showed and he kept asking questions. Jobs kept saying that he couldn’t believe that Xerox had not commercialized the technology. “You’re sitting on a gold mine,” he shouted. “I can’t believe Xerox is not taking advantage of this.”

The Smalltalk demonstration showed the graphical interface that was made possible by a bitmapped screen. “It was like a veil being lifted from my eyes,” Jobs recalled. “I could see what the future of computing was destined to be.”

And recalling this incident, he once said, “Picasso had a saying— ‘good artists copy, great artists steal’—and we have always been shameless about stealing great ideas.”

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**The Reality Distortion Field**

According to the Macintosh team, Steve had a reality distortion field. In his presence, reality is malleable. He can convince anyone of practically anything. It wears off when he’s not around, but it makes it hard to have realistic schedules. It was dangerous to get caught in Steve’s distortion field, but it was what led him to actually be able to change reality.

The reality distortion field was a confounding mélange of a charismatic rhetorical style, indomitable will, and eagerness to bend any fact to fit the purpose at hand.

There was little that could shield you from the force. Amazingly, the reality distortion field seemed to be effective even if you were acutely aware of it.

He would assert something—be it a fact about world history or a recounting of who suggested an idea at a meeting —without even considering the truth. It came from willfully defying reality, not only to others but to himself. It allowed him to con people into believing his vision, because he has personally embraced and internalized it. A lot of people distort reality, of course. When Jobs did so, it was often a tactic for accomplishing something.

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**Birth of rounded corner rectangles in computer graphics**

Jobs obsessed with equal intensity about the look of what would appear on the screen.

He wanted his team to make the rectangles in Lisa and Mac to have rounded corners but the team was reluctant due to the implementation complexities.

To argue this Jobs said, “Rectangles with rounded corners are everywhere!” jumping up and getting more intense. “Just look around this room!” He pointed out the whiteboard and the tabletop and other objects that were rectangular with rounded corners. “And look outside, there’s even more, practically everywhere you look!” He dragged the engineer out for a walk, pointing out car windows and billboards and street signs. “Within three blocks, we found seventeen examples,” said Jobs. “I started pointing them out everywhere until he was completely convinced.”

The dialogue boxes and windows on the Lisa and the Mac, and almost every other subsequent computer, ended up being rendered with rounded corners.

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**Obsession with design and detail**

From his father Jobs had learned that a hallmark of passionate craftsmanship is making sure that even the aspects that will remain hidden are done beautifully. Jobs argued for clean looking circuit boards saying that “it should be as beautiful as possible, even if it’s inside the box. A great carpenter isn’t going to use lousy wood for the back of a cabinet, even though nobody’s going to see it.”

From Mike Markkula he had learned the importance of packaging and presentation. People do judge a book by its cover, so for the box of the Macintosh, Jobs chose a full-color design and kept trying to make it look better. He got the guys to redo it fifty times. It was going to be thrown in the trash as soon as the consumer opened it, but he was obsessed by how it looked. To Rossmann, this showed a lack of balance; money was being spent on expensive packaging while they were trying to save money on the memory chips. But for Jobs, each detail was essential to making the Macintosh amazing.

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**Mac Celebration**

The retreat of September 1982. Here, Jobs’ speech comprised of multiple parts.

The first was “**Don’t compromise**.” It was an injunction that would, over time, be both helpful and harmful. Most technology teams made trade-offs. The Mac, on the other hand, would end up being as “insanely great” as Jobs and his acolytes could possibly make it—but it would not ship for another sixteen months, way behind schedule. After mentioning a scheduled completion date, he told them, “It would be better to miss than to turn out the wrong thing.”

Another chart contained a koōan-like phrase that was his favorite maxim: “**The journey is the reward**.” The Mac team, he liked to emphasize, was a special corps with an exalted mission. Someday they would all look back on their journey together and, forgetting or laughing off the painful moments, would regard it as a magical high point in their lives. At the end of the presentation someone asked whether he thought they should do some market research to see what customers wanted. “No,” he replied, “because customers don’t know what they want until we’ve shown them.”

It had been a grueling ride for Mac team, and many egos had been bruised by Jobs’s obnoxious and rough management style. But neither Raskin nor Wozniak nor Sculley nor anyone else at the company could have pulled off the creation of the Macintosh. Nor would it likely have emerged from focus groups and committees.

On the day he unveiled the Macintosh, a reporter from Popular Science asked Jobs what type of market research he had done. Jobs responded by scoffing, “**Did Alexander Graham Bell do any market research before he invented the telephone**?”

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**Sculley and Jobs Face-off**

In 1983, Jobs had got John Sculley (the then CEO of Pepsi) to take the job at Apple using his famous line “You want to sell sugar water for the rest of your life, or do you want to come with me and change the world?”.

But honeymoon period of the two was over by the second half of 1984 when Macintosh’s sales began to taper off because of several technical issues.

There were many reasons for the rift between Jobs and Sculley in the spring of 1985. For Jobs, the problem was that Sculley never became a product person. He didn’t make the effort, or show the capacity, to understand the fine points of what they were making.

For Sculley, the problem was that Jobs, when he was no longer in courtship or manipulative mode, was frequently obnoxious, rude, selfish, and nasty to other people. He found Jobs’s boorish behavior as despicable as Jobs found Sculley’s lack of passion for product details.

In May 1985, Sculley decided to reorganize Apple, and proposed a plan to the board that would remove Jobs from the Macintosh group and put him in charge of "New Product Development". This move would effectively render Jobs powerless within Apple. In response, Jobs then developed a plan to get rid of Sculley and take over Apple. However, Jobs was confronted after the plan was leaked, and he said that he would leave Apple. The Board declined his resignation and asked him to reconsider. Sculley also told Jobs that he had all of the votes needed to go ahead with the reorganization. A few months later, on September 17, 1985, Jobs submitted a letter of resignation to the Apple Board. Five additional senior Apple employees also resigned and joined Jobs in his new venture, NeXT.

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**iCEO**

In 1996, Apple announced that it would buy [NeXT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NeXT) for $427 million. The deal brought Jobs back to the company he had cofounded. In March 1998, to concentrate Apple's efforts on returning to profitability, Jobs terminated a number of projects, such as [Newton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newton_(platform)) and [Cyberdog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyberdog). In the coming months, many employees developed a fear of encountering Jobs while riding in the elevator, "afraid that they might not have a job when the doors opened. The reality was that Jobs's summary executions were rare, but a handful of victims was enough to terrorize a whole company."

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**iMac**

The first great design triumph to come from the Jobs-Ive (the chief design officer of Apple, joined Apple in 1992) collaboration was the iMac. Jobs had certain specifications. It should be an all-in-one product, with keyboard and monitor and computer ready to use right out of the box. It should have a distinctive design that made a brand statement. And it should sell for $1,200 or so. (Apple had no computer selling for less than $2,000 at the time.)

Design Changes:

It was the first computer to not have a floppy disk drive. Jobs reasoned it by quoting the hockey star Wayne Gretzky’s maxim, “Skate where the puck’s going, not where it’s been.”

The plastic casing that Ive and Coster proposed was sea-green blue and it was translucent so that you could see through to the inside of the machine.

Even the simplicity of the plastic shell itself involved great complexity. The cost of each case was more than $60 per unit, three times that of a regular computer case. Other companies would probably have demanded presentations and studies to show whether the translucent case would increase sales enough to justify the extra cost. Jobs asked for no such analysis.

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**The iPhone Design**

On many of his major projects, such as the first Toy Story and the Apple store, Jobs pressed “pause” as they neared completion and decided to make major revisions. That happened with the design of the iPhone as well.

The problem was that the iPhone should have been all about the display, but in their current design the case competed with the display instead of getting out of the way. “Guys, you’ve killed yourselves over this design for the last nine months, but we’re going to change it,” Jobs told Ive’s team. “We’re all going to have to work nights and weekends, and if you want we can hand out some guns so you can kill us now.” Instead of balking, the team agreed. “It was one of my proudest moments at Apple,” Jobs recalled. The new design ended up with just a thin stainless steel bezel that allowed the gorilla glass display to go right to the edge. Every part of the device seemed to defer to the screen. The new look was austere, yet also friendly. You could fondle it. It meant they had to redo the circuit boards, antenna, and processor placement inside, but Jobs ordered the change. “Other companies may have shipped,” said Fadell, “but we pressed the reset button and started over.”