

## Bill Gates—From a Nerd to a Business Magnate



The fire of Era of Digitalization was already ignited and Bill Gates acted as fuel for it. We state many big personalities who have changed the world well, and Gates fell into that category. He is a business magnate, an investor, an author, a coder, a philanthropist, a humanitarian, principal founder of Microsoft Corporation. He has brought the revolutionary change in the history of personal computing. Though, he had been criticised for his business tactics which were mostly stated as anti-competitive, he successfully took his company to the heights. He was recognized by Forbes as the richest person in the world consecutively from 1995 to 2017 with a present estimated net worth around \$90 billion. Later on, the title was surpassed to Amazon's founder-CEO Jeff Bezos for around \$ 150 billion. His contribution through Microsoft Inc. in the field of computer science is remarkable.

### A Harvard Boy

*'Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose.'* –Bill Gates

William Henry Gates III was a bright kid and had privilege since his childhood. His father was a prominent lawyer and his mother served on boards of directors at the First Interstate BancSystem and the United Way. At the tender age of 13, he showed interest in BASIC programming on Teletype Model 33 in the school and thereby, he was allowed to skip maths classes. He wrote his first computer program, which was an implementation of tic-tac-toe that allowed users to play games against the computer. Besides, it was expected by his parents that Bill must pursue law career, but the young one was floating towards the shore of computing. He graduated from Lakeside as a National Merit Scholar and got a scholarship for his further studies. With a score of 1590 out of 1600 in SAT, he took pre-law maths and computer science courses at Harvard College. He never had the study-plan and was spending most of his time on college computers. In his second year, he came up with an algorithm of pancake sorting in order to provide a solution to the unsolved problems presented in a combinatorics class by Harry Lewis, one of his professors. His solution was

recorded as the fastest version for over thirty years. As the matter of fact, its successor surpassed Bill's record only by one per cent faster. With the launch of MITS Altair 8800 based on the Intel 8080 CPU in the following year, Gates and Allen saw an opportunity in it and decided to start a software company of their own. And right there, gears were shifting towards the establishment of the biggest software company in the world.

### **A Revolutionary Step**

Back in 80's, having a personal computer was sort of a big deal and utilizing it was more difficult than it seems. Apple Computers was the leading expert and pioneer in the field of personal computing and big corporations like IBM were also entering into this field. In 1975 when Altair 8800 was launched, Gates was very much intrigued by it, but there was no BASIC written for the machine. Gates and Allen contacted the company and within one week offered them a BASIC GE programming for the minicomputer. When tested, it worked perfectly with the machine, resulting into joining hands with MITS and under the name of Micro-Soft with a hyphen. Bill was completely against hobbyist approach and believed in the idea that software developers should demand for more payment. Due to similar ideological differences, in 1976 Microsoft got independent, and shifted its office to Bellevue, Washington. At the start, the business responsibility did fell on all of the employees. Even Bill was writing programs along with managing the business operations. He claimed that each and every line of the code before shifting was checked by him and was making changes as per required. He was always keen in providing perfection and let no loose-strings in his work.

### **Responsible towards the Society**

*'The most amazing philanthropists are people who are actually making a significant sacrifice.'* -Bill Gates

Apart from creating and running such a big corporation, Bill Gates is also a philanthropist. In the year 2000, he stepped down from full-time CEO to part-time and his position was succeeded by Steve Ballmer. After that, Bill gave his maximum time to Bill and Melinda Foundation, whose assets are supposedly reported to be USD 38 billion. It's the wealthiest private charitable foundation which provides funds to various NGO's, and also gives out every single detail of money spent. The foundation is organized into four programs—Global Development Division, Global Health Division, United States Division, and Global Policy & Advocacy Division.

Bill Gates aptly exemplifies the quality of being generous. There are millions of computer geeks who look up to him as role model and he did prove himself to be worthy of it. Through Microsoft, Bill Gates's created a dent in the history of digitalization, now it's time for new generation of tech-talents to change the world.

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