

Steve Jobs: Imitated, Never Duplicated by David Pogue for *The New York Times*, 10/6/11

Wednesday evening, Apple broke the news that Steve Jobs had died.

Since that moment, tributes, eulogies and retrospectives have poured over the world like rain. He changed industries, redefined business models, fused technology and art. People are comparing him to Thomas Edison, Walt Disney, Leonardo da Vinci. And they're saying that it will be a very long time before the world sees the likes of Steve Jobs again.

Probably true. But why not, do you suppose?

After all, there are other brilliant marketers, designers and business executives. They're all over Silicon Valley — all over the world. Many of them, maybe most of them, have studied Steve Jobs, tried to absorb his methods and his philosophy. Surely if they pore over the Steve Jobs playbook long enough, they can What re-create some of his success.

But nobody ever does, even when they copy Mr. Jobs's moves down to the last eyebrow twitch. Why not?

Here's a guy who never finished college, never went to business school, never worked for anyone else a day in his adult life. So how did he become the visionary who changed every business he touched? Actually, he's given us clues all along. Remember the "Think Different" ad campaign he introduced upon his return to Apple in 1997?

"Here's to the crazy ones. The rebels. The troublemakers. The ones who see things differently. While some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius."

In other words, the story of Steve Jobs boils down to this: Don't go with the flow.

Steve Jobs refused to go with the flow. If he saw something that could be made better, smarter or more beautiful, nothing else mattered. Not internal politics, not economic convention, not social graces.

Apple has attained its current astonishing levels of influence and success because it's nimble. It's incredibly focused. It's had stunningly few flops.

And that's because Mr. Jobs didn't buy into focus groups, groupthink or decision by committee. At its core, Apple existed to execute the visions in his brain. He oversaw every button, every corner, every chime. He lost sleep over the fonts in the menus, the cardboard of the packaging, the color of the power cord.

That's just not how things are done.

Often, his laser focus flew in the face of screamingly obvious common sense. He wanted to open a chain of retail stores — after the failure of Gateway's chain had clearly demonstrated that the concept was doomed.

He wanted to sell a smartphone that had no keyboard, when physical keys were precisely what had made the BlackBerry the most popular smartphone at the time.

Over and over again, he took away our comfy blankets. He took away our floppy drives, our dial-up modems, our camcorder jacks, our non-glossy screens, our Flash, our DVD drives, our removable laptop batteries.

How could he do that? You're supposed to add features, not take them away, Steve! That's just not done!

(Often, I was one of the bellyachers. And often, I'd hear from Mr. Jobs. He'd call me at home, or when I was out to dinner, or when I was vacationing with my family. And he'd berate me for not seeing his bigger picture. On the other hand, sometimes he'd call to praise me for appreciating what he was going for. A C.E.O. calling a reviewer at home? That's just not done.)

Eventually, of course, most people realized that he was just doing that Steve Jobs thing again: being ahead

of his time.

Eventually, in fact, society adopted a cycle of reaction to Apple that became so predictable, it could have been a “Saturday Night Live” skit.

Phase 1: Steve Jobs takes the stage to introduce a new product.

Phase 2: The tech bloggers savage it. (“The iPad has no mouse, no keyboard, no GPS, no USB, no card slot, no camera, no Flash!? It’s dead on arrival!”)

Phase 3: The product comes out, the public goes nuts for it, the naysayers seem to disappear into the earth.

Phase 4: The rest of the industry leaps into high gear trying to do just what Apple did.

And so yes, there are other geniuses. There are other brilliant marketers, designers and business executives. Maybe, once or twice in a million, those skills even coincide in the same person.

But will that person also have the vision? The name “Steve Jobs” may appear on 300 patents, but his gift wasn’t invention. It was seeing the promise in some early, clunky technology — and polishing it, refining it and simplifying it until it becomes a standard component. Like the mouse, menus, windows, the CD-ROM or Wi-Fi.

Even at Apple, is there anyone with the imagination to pluck brilliant, previously unthinkable visions out of the air — and the conviction to see them through with monomaniacal attention to detail?

Suppose there were. Suppose, by some miracle, that some kid in a garage somewhere at this moment possesses the marketing, invention, business and design skills of a Steve Jobs. What are the odds that that same person will be comfortable enough — or maybe uncomfortable enough — to swim upstream, against the currents of social, economic and technological norms, all in pursuit of an unshakable vision?

Zero. The odds are zero.

Mr. Jobs is gone. Everyone who knew him feels that sorrow. But the ripples of that loss will widen in the days, weeks and years to come: to the people in the industries he changed. To his hundreds of millions of customers. And to the billions of people touched more indirectly by the greater changes that Steve Jobs brought about, even if they’re unaware of it.

In 2005, Steve Jobs gave the commencement address to the graduating students at Stanford. He told them the secret that defined him in every action, every decision, every creation of his tragically unfinished life:

“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.”

Possible Response Options:

1. What do you hope that you’ll be remembered for after you die? How does that line up with the way you’re currently living your life?
2. What are your core beliefs? What would you say is your personal credo? How does that credo guide you in life?¹

¹ This is part of the prompt taken from Holly Epstein Ojalvo’s “What Is Your Personal Credo?”, found at <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/07/what-is-your-personal-credo/>

The Personal Credo of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the future Pope Francis, as found in *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* by Austen Ivereigh

I want to believe in God the Father who loves me like a child, and in Jesus The Lord who infused my life with. His Spirit, to make me smile and so carry me to the eternal Kingdom of life.

I believe in the Church.

I believe in my life story, which was pierced by God's loving gaze, who on that spring day of 21st September, came out to meet me to invite me to follow him.

I believe in my pain, made fruitless by the egotism in which I take refuge.

I believe in the stinginess of my soul, which seeks to take without giving.

I believe in the goodness of others, and that I must love them without fear and without betraying them, never seeking my own security.

I believe in the religious life.

I believe I wish to love a lot.

I believe in the burning death of each day, from which I flee but which smiles at me, inviting me to accept her.

I believe in God's patience, as good and as welcoming as a summer's night.

I believe that Dad is with the Lord in heaven.

I believe that Fr. Duterte is there, too, interceding for my priesthood.

I believe in Mary, my Mother, who, loves me and will never leave me alone.

And I believe in the surprise of each day, in which will be manifest love, strength, betrayal, and sin, which will be always with me until that definitive encounter with that marvelous face which I do not know, which always escapes me, but which I wish to know and love. Amen.

Possible Response Options:

1. The word credo literally means "I believe" in Latin. The above example is heavily steeped in the Catholic faith tradition, but credos need not line up with any given system of belief. Using another sheet of paper, list the things that you believe.

Be Cool to the Pizza Dude, by Sarah Adams, as heard on the *This I Believe* podcast 12/28/15

If I have one operating philosophy about life it is this: “Be cool to the pizza delivery dude; it’s good luck.” Four principles guide the pizza dude philosophy.

Principle 1: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in humility and forgiveness. I let him cut me off in traffic, let him safely hit the exit ramp from the left lane, let him forget to use his blinker without extending any of my **digits** out the window or towards my horn because there should be one moment in my harried life when a car may encroach or cut off or pass and I let it go. Sometimes when I have become so certain of my ownership of my lane, daring anyone to challenge me, the pizza dude speeds by me in his rusted Chevette. His pizza light atop his car glowing like a beacon reminds me to check myself as I flow through the world. After all, the dude is delivering pizza to young and old, families and singletons, gays and straights, blacks, whites and browns, rich and poor, vegetarians and meat lovers alike. As he journeys, I give safe passage, practice restraint, show courtesy, and contain my anger.

Principle 2: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in empathy. Let’s face it: We’ve all taken jobs just to have a job because some money is better than none. I’ve held an assortment of these jobs and was grateful for the paycheck that meant I didn’t have to share my Cheerios with my cats. In the big pizza wheel of life, sometimes you’re the hot bubbly cheese and sometimes you’re the burnt crust. It’s good to remember the fickle spinning of that wheel.

Principle 3: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in honor and it reminds me to honor honest work. Let me tell you something about these dudes: They never took over a company and, as CEO, artificially inflated the value of the stock and cashed out their own shares, bringing the company to the brink of bankruptcy, resulting in 20,000 people losing their jobs while the CEO builds a home the size of a luxury hotel. Rather, the dudes sleep the sleep of the just.

Principle 4: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in equality. My measurement as a human being, my worth, is the pride I take in performing my job — any job — and the respect with which I treat others. I am the equal of the world not because of the car I drive, the size of the TV I own, the weight I can bench press, or the calculus equations I can solve. I am the equal to all I meet because of the kindness in my heart. And it all starts here — with the pizza delivery dude.

Tip him well, friends and brethren, for that which you bestow freely and willingly will bring you all the happy luck that a grateful universe knows how to return.

Google's Take on the meaning of "credo" (Searches conducted on 1/12/16)

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cre·do

/ˈkrēdō, ˈkrādō/

noun
noun: credo; plural noun: credos

a statement of the beliefs or aims that guide someone's actions.
"he announced his credo in his first editorial"
synonyms: statement of belief(s), article of faith, **doctrine, creed, axiom, dogma, tenet, canon, More**

- a creed of the Christian Church in Latin.
noun: Credo; plural noun: Credos
- a musical setting of the Nicene Creed, typically as part of a mass.
noun: Credo

Origin

LATIN

credo → credo
I believe Middle English

Middle English: Latin, 'I believe.' Compare with **creed**.

Translate credo to

Use over time for: credo

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et·y·mol·o·gy

/ˌedəˈmäləjē/

noun

the study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history.

- the origin of a word and the historical development of its meaning.
plural noun: **etymologies**
synonyms: **derivation, word history, development, origin, source**
"the etymology of a word may be unknown"

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