

# **I AM JOBSLESS**

**(By S. Jaikumar, Advocate, Swamy Associates)**

*"If Eve were to make a choice today, I am sure its gonna be Mac"*

*- Internet Quote*

Other than being a visionary, the striking similarity between the three legends of this cyber era (Steve Jobs - Apple, Bill Gates - Microsoft and Mark Zuckerberg - Facebook) who revolutionized and mesmerized this generation, more particularly the college students is that all of them were college drop – outs!

Steve Jobs @ 56, announced his retirement after a glorious reign of around 14 years at Apple Inc, after increasing the share value of his company to a whopping 57 fold! The market capitalization of Apple had crossed 350 billion USD surpassing its archrival Microsoft and becoming the most valuable company in the planet, only next to ExxonMobil. During this golden age of Jobs, under his ultimate leadership and singular vision combining inspiration and his extraordinary gut instinct, the company went on to create products, which became the basic instinct among the consumers.

Despite many Apples a day, the doctor couldn't be kept away and Jobs had to step down as the Chief Executive Officer of Apple.Inc last month owing to his pancreatic cancer and today the fatal disease has consumed him, leaving the whole planet mourning and I am no exception. After all, like millions, everyday I also

wake up with the alarm in my iPhone and sleep listening to the lullabies in my iPod!

Way back in 2005, when the Editor of Taxindiaonline called me and compelled me to read a TIOL-Special featuring an address by Steve Jobs of Apple Inc delivered at the Stanford, I was a bit annoyed about his insistence. Actually, at that point of time, I had no clue either about Steve Jobs or about Apple. I should confess that I never read that column that day and its for real good. Today, after knowing a bit about Jobs and his magnificent hardware, when I read the piece I could understand the message clear and deep!

In one of the most inspirational addresses of all time, delivered at the Stanford University on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005 (***Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish***), Jobs sarcastically described the occasion to be his “closest” ever to a college graduation and he thrilled the audience with 3 soul-touching stories of his life.

**Connecting the dots:** There can't be two opinions about the perfection of Jobs, be it either about the hardware or the software. In his ruthless pursuit towards perfection, Jobs had exhaustively prototyped everything he did including Apple's retail stores. Jobs' design philosophy had been very simple – constant simplification! It was this ingenious design philosophy towards simplification which had led to the development of the iconic “scroll wheel” which we have in the iPod instead of the regular

“on/off buttons. Jobs had been such a meticulous man being very conscious in “details” that even while designing the brochures for Apple, he was particular about everything, even about the weight of the paper! It is told that while working on the casing of his first Mac, he used to wander around the Apple’s parking lot studying the bodywork of German and Italian cars! No doubt his architecture were matching Italian style and German engineering!

Connecting the dots, I see his brief days at Reed College, wherein he took on the “Calligraphy” classes, could be another important reflection for his impeccable perfectionism!

**Don’t Settle:** Jobs took scary risks when he launched innovative new products, relying solely on his instincts rather than the usual crutches of focus groups and market research, which he shunned. Despite having humiliating failures he always rebounded, thick and fast. Though his Apple I did not do well he believed and made the Apple II, which was a blockbuster. Though his Lisa is a super failure he responded with the Macintosh, which eventually succeeded after a slow start.

Year 2000 was a nightmare to Apple. Its shares fell from 53 USD to an abysmal 14 USD. The company lost over 247million USD in the last quarter alone and the CBS Marketwatch named Jobs as one of the biggest losers of the year. But at the Macworld conference in San Francisco in Jan 2001, Jobs was so optimistic and visionary as ever. In last quarter of 2001, Jobs responded

with the iconic iPod which heralded the world that Jobs envisioned.

To me, the greatest breakthrough for Apple is neither iPod nor the iPhone but the iTunes! In line with his "Don't Settle" theory, Jobs, after his huge success in hardware launched his iTunes store in 2003. Initially though many did not believe that iTunes could become much of a business, with an estimated 200 million customer base, this "micropayment" model would enable Apple to make perennial money.

**Follow your heart:** In the last leg of his address, when he spoke about the "inevitable", he had already been diagnosed of pancreatic cancer and he had started his preparation for the ultimate voyage. I feel his words "**Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new...**" had much more meaning than the words themselves.

Jobs had always insisted to have courage to follow one's heart and intuition. Nearing death had only helped him to realize many things and had also helped him to make great choices in life.

I conclude this tribute to the legend quoting his own words...

*"Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything – all external expectations, all pride,*

*all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. **There is no reason not to follow your heart.**"*

Be it is a sport or an art or any other walks of life, a Genius, after cascading to the ultimate orbit of excellence, had always remained there and entertained the rest by delivering the best, constantly and consistently. Once they reach the elite top, they try to stick on to a particular bandwidth or an IP address and thereafter they do not experiment much. Among the Genius, there are a few, who even after reaching the summit, still continue to experiment, despite the threat of losing the glory! They are IMMORTALS! To my limited knowledge, with his extraordinary courage and eternal quest to experiment, Pablo Picasso is one! It is stated that, after painting his masterpiece he said, "My best is yet to come". And Jobs is another!