A General Comparison between Bill Gates and Steve Jobs

作者:
蘇彥碩。市立大同高中。高一 107 班
陳子玟。市立大同高中。高一 106 班

指導老師：秦豫敏
I Introduction

Technology has made our life more convenient. As the time changes fast, many things are invented to make people’s life more convenient. The invention and popularization of software plays an important role in this technological era. Also, the innovation of personal computers and the smartphones changes our life substantially.

When it comes to computer software, the first person we might come up to mind is Bill Gates. Bill Gates, who is one of the richest people in the world, has an important contribution to software area. The company, Microsoft, that he established exploit a lot of software such as Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Visual Studio Systems. Microsoft made a roaring success in commerce and become the head of all the computer companies.

On the other hand, we will never mention the smartphones without thinking about Steve Jobs. Steve Jobs, who was one of the most influential businessmen in the world, established the company—Apple, that caused an unprecedented revolution in the electronic information area. And he was widely recognized as a charismatic pioneer of the personal computer revolution. He was a great entrepreneur, marketer, and inventor. All new innovative electronic products like iPod, iPhone, iPad, iMac were released by him. These convenient products shorten the distance between people, and have provided us with more comfortable devices when we listen to music and play computer games. Although he was dead, the incredible influence he made and the brand, Apple that he initiated are consistently changing the world.

Bill Gates and Steve Jobs both caught the key to opening the door of the new world —technology. One is the king of the computer software, and the other has plays an influential role in the technology and music industries.
Being surrounded by high-tech products since we were little, we have benefited from the pleasure and knowledge that these technology brought to us. We would like to know and research more about Bill Gates and Steve Job’s lifetime, career, achievements, contribution, how they succeeded and what made them so successful by comparing them.

Moreover, we’d like to know if there’s something we can learn from them. Therefore, we would like to make a study on the topic – *A General Comparison between Bill Gates and Steve Jobs.*

**II Method**

Since the Internet has become the most convenient tool in the world, we look for the information we need on the Net. We read some literature about Bill Gates and Steve Jobs. In addition, we also read their biography, so that we could have a thorough understanding about them by carefully digesting and analyzing the information we collected.

This comparison is divided into four parts, focusing respectively on their family and education background, their career, the key to their success and their charity. In each part, we individually introduce them, and then we made a general comparison between them.
III Body Part

1. Background

1.1 Family background

Bill Gates was born in Seattle, America on October 28th, 1955. His father was a famous lawyer in Seattle and his mother was a director of the bank system. His family was wealthier than most of the other kids’ in his grade. He grew up with his two sisters. His parents were strict, but they really respected them. Bill Gates’ family played an important role in his future career. For example, since his father was a lawyer, Bill Gates was good at making contracts with other companies. He even didn’t need to hire a lawyer. The most important thing is that when he was negotiating with an extensive company such as IBM, his knowledge of law kept him and his company away from running into deficit.

As for Steve Jobs, he was adopted. His foster parents were working-class people. They promised to send Steve into college. He has two sisters, too. One is from his genetic parents, and the other is from his foster parents. His family was not rich, but his foster parents kept their promise and sent him into college. Speaking of Steve’s interests, his foster father, Paul Steve, might be the person who influenced him the most. Paul Steve was an automobile worker. Steve Jobs was interested in the delicate machinery of cars. This interest became the foundation of his future career.
1.2 Educational background

Bill Gates studied in a public elementary school in Seattle. After he graduated, he went into the Lakeside School, a famous private school. In 1973, Bill Gates became a freshman in the most well-known college, Harvard. In Harvard, Bill Gates showed his great interest in computers. In the third grade of college, Bill Gates dropped out of school because he knew that it was time to change the world by computer.

As for Steve Jobs, after he finished his high school. He chose neither colleges with cheap tuition nor Stanford, which was near his house. He went into Reed College, one of the most expensive colleges in the whole United States. After one and a half year, Steve Jobs decided to drop out of school because he thought that he didn’t learn anything but spent a lot of money that his foster parents saved. In 1974, he ended his eighteen-month college life and started finding a job.

Both of them were well-educated and decided to drop out of college. They knew that it was time for IT (Informational Technology) to change the world. Staying in college is just a waste their time. They are both a man of great vision and they knew that getting a college degree couldn’t guarantee them a promising future. Dropping out of school is the only way to build their dreams. This decision leads them to their success in the future.

2. Career

2.1 The Company They Established

Bill Gates started programming computer when he was thirteen. Then, he met Paul Allen when he was in high school. After he dropped out of Harvard, he and Paul established Microsoft together in 1975. Bill Gates was the boss of Microsoft. In his career life, he didn’t change any of his jobs. He stayed in Microsoft until he retired.
Steve Jobs was totally different from Bill Gates. His life was full of twists and turns. In 1976, when he was twenty one years old, he and his friend established his first company, Apple, in their garage. Years later, Apple lost most of the capital fund. Steve had a huge argument about how to solve the problem with the CEO of Apple. After the meeting of the board of directors, he was discharged from his post. In 1985, he left the company he built. After he left Apple, all he was thinking is to revenge. He built another company called NeXT to compete with Apple. Unfortunately, NeXT was almost busted and it was acquired by Apple. Steve and his team were back to Apple. At that time, Apple had changed five CEOs but nobody could fix the situation that Apple was close to bankruptcy. Everyone knew that Steve was the only one who could save Apple. Steve Job was hired to be the CEO. After Steve agreed to take this position, he started reforming the company. With his talent, in 2000, Apple became one of the most famous companies in the world.

Bill Gates established Microsoft and he used his great talent to make his company be the head of the computer industry. As for Steve Jobs, his faith and passion led him to success. Although some of their business weren’t smooth, they both became successful entrepreneurs in the end. Thus, a temporary failure doesn’t mean a failure for a lifetime.

2.2 Product influence

The most well-known software that Microsoft created was named “Office.” It is the most common processing software. We can see it on the personal computer everywhere at school, in the office, and at home. With its feasibility and compatibility, most people choose it rather than the software of Apple. In the past, this kind of useful software was really expensive. Only the government or a university could afford the price. Nowadays, these expensive softwares were on every personal computer. It’s all because that Microsoft reduced the indirect cost of the software so that everyone could afford it.
On the other hand, the company, Apple, became famous after they released their third product, the Macintosh. It was a new milestone of the personal computer. In the past, a computer could be larger than a classroom, but Apple made it as small as a box. After Steve was back, iPod, iPhone and, iPad one by one was released. Every product was all the rage. They were so prevalent that they were always out of stock. For people, Apple, isn’t just a trademark, but a symbol of modern fashion. Smaller, lighter, faster, more convenient, and more humanize. Apple’s products not only innovates the technology but also brings us a better life.

3. The key to their success

Bill Gates believed that computers would become a valuable tool in the future. Based on this concept, Bill Gates started programming softwares for personal computers. We can say it is Microsoft that puts a PC on every desk and in every house. Bill Gates’ prophetic vision is the key that lead Microsoft to success. With his lead, Microsoft built an operating system which made computing easier to operate, and more convenient for users. Doubtless, Bill Gates had a great impact on the world.

Steve Jobs succeeded because of his vision of the future as well. He gave his costumers not only what they desired, but what they didn’t yet think they might desire. Also, he was always in pursuit of perfection. He really cared about details. Because of his insistence, Apple’s products barely have any defect. They always tried their best to make their costumers satisfied with their products. That’s the reason that each of its products would always take the lead after hitting the market.
4. Charity

Bill Gates has donated lots of his money to the foundation he and his wife established together. It was named, “Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation”. It not only provides scholarship for poor students but also supports the research of different kinds of diseases. Through this foundation, Bill Gates hopes that he can stop most of the diseases in Africa. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation always helped people in need. In 2005, Bill Gates had a meeting with fifty billionaires in China. He encouraged them to donate fifty percent of their property to the foundations around the world. He thinks that with greater property comes greater responsibility. By giving speeches, he hopes that everyone can do something for the poor around the globe.

Different from Bill Gates, Steve donated his money secretly. When he called off the charity department of Apple, people think that he doesn’t care about helping the poor. However, after he was dead, people found out that he had donated lots of money for AIDS research. Moreover, he also sponsored the Stanford’s Medicine Department 50 million dollars. He and his wife neither let people know what they had done nor wanted to be reported by the media. He thought that doing charities wasn’t for showing off, but for the good of the world.

IV Conclusion

According to the research we did above, we found that some traits both Bill Gates and Steve Jobs have in common make them successful entrepreneurs. First, they both dropped out of college. It means that neither of them cares about the college degree. They think learning shouldn’t be limited on campus. Second, their personality traits are unique. Bill Gates is a workaholic. He usually works 65 hours a week. On the other hand, Steve Jobs is a
perfectionist; he would ask his employees to fix every tiny mistake until it was completely perfect. They both worked very hard in their posts. Third, they both have shown perseverance in achieving their goals and they lead their company with great passion. Fourth, they both have a prophetic vision, so they can manufacture the products which meet the needs of the consumers. Last, they care about the welfare of the society, so they donated a lot of money to the unprivileged.

Therefore, we can learn that the keys to success are perseverance, passion, and vision. It takes more than luck to succeed. Hope that we can learn a lot from them and be as successful as them.

**IV Reference**

維基百科-比爾蓋茲。2014 年 10 月 10 日，取材自：

http://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E6%AF%94%E5%B0%94%C2%B7%E7%9B%96%E8%8C%A8

維基百科-賈伯斯。2014 年 10 月 10 日，取材自：

http://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E5%8F%B2%E8%92%82%E5%A4%AB%C2%B7%E4%B9%94%E5%B8%83%E6%96%AF

賈伯斯傳。2014 年 10 月 10 日，取材自：
作者：華特·艾薩克森。譯者：廖月娟
出版日：2011 年 10 月 24 日。
出版社：天下文化
ISBN：9780002160636

比爾蓋茲傳。2014 年 10 月 10 日，取材自：
作者：不詳。改寫者：由興波