



Will we cry when you die? An open letter.

Dear Michael Dell, Larry Ellison, Larry Page and other CEOs of large American corporations:

I am sure you all saw the news when Steve Jobs died. The spontaneous, international show of mourning was nothing short of amazing.

My question is, do you think we will cry when you die?

The irony is that Jobs was more like you than like us. Jobs was a multi-billionaire who lived in a walled mansion and flew around on private jets when he traveled. Most of us never got to meet Jobs and we certainly couldn't call him or schedule a meeting with him - just as most of us will never have a chance to meet you either.

The reality is, you are much more like him than we are. You are all visionaries and innovators in your own right. You all imagined a world, far off in the future, that didn't exist yet and set out to build it. Each of you, your products and companies really did change the way we live our lives...in the case of a few of you, arguably even more than Jobs did. You took big risks, sometimes winning and sometimes losing, and in the process you lived the America dream and built huge, multinational corporations. You're all pretty remarkable people by any standards and, there is no question, we respect you. Though I'm sure you're all pretty decent guys, we won't cry when your time comes because, well, we just don't love you.

And that's the one thing Jobs had that resulted in mass shows of emotion when we lost him. We loved him. We didn't love him for what he built or accomplished. Those things are not, in comparison to all of you, exceptional. We loved him for something he gave us that exists on a level far greater than any product or technology - he gave us something to believe in. It is that one seemingly minor thing, something deeply seeded in our reptilian, limbic brains, that he mastered and most of you have lost. Steve Jobs stood for something.

If you have any fantasies of spontaneous public love when your time comes, then you need to go back to your own roots. You need to rediscover your own cause - the thing that inspired you when you had nothing but a dream and a



bunch of friends willing to help you build it. You used to be able to inspire a room with your words, now you work hard to ensure the analysts like what you say.

Go back to the time when you were the idealist, when you stood for something, when your dreams were clearer than the reality that told you that you were crazy. Go back to that. Be that person again...the one we used to love.

Jobs was not unique for what he built. He was not unique for the gift he had. It wasn't even unique that he had a bold vision for how the world should operate. What made him remarkable was that he never lost it...not until the day he died. And for that, we miss him dearly.