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download a copy and take the time to absorb the numerous lessons offered.

**Darren Root, CPA, CITP, CGMA • Jun. 27, 2012**



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Jobs and his unprecedented 12-year run after his return to Apple in 1997.

The ideas within the book challenged me to think differently about my business. It's difficult, of course, to apply the same techniques to my firm as Apple did, but Jobs left behind a legacy of brilliant ideas. Here are a few to consider:

- **Innovation**—Steve Jobs often quoted Wayne Gretsky, the famed professional hockey player, stating: “I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.” This is very evident in Apple’s invention, or reinvention, of several products. Ask yourself: How can I be innovative in my practice? Where is the puck *going to be*? (Because you already know where it has been.)
- **Focus**—When Jobs returned to Apple, he discovered that the company was on the brink of bankruptcy. Apple was producing a wide array of products with a vision to develop more in order to increase revenue. Jobs first task included reviewing all products to determine Apple’s “core competencies.” In other words, what the company did best. Jobs determined that all of Apple’s products were just mediocre. He declared from that point on that the company would focus all their resources on making those products “insanely great.” Ask yourself: What are my core competencies? What services can I provide insanely great? It’s all about focus and defining your business model.
- **Keep it Simple**—It’s important to understand that “simple” is harder to attain than complex. Jobs constantly directed Apple developers to make products simple to use. His theory was that while it requires more time and resources to create a product that is easy to use, *simple* is why customers engage. Many of today’s firms have processes that are way to complex, and this complexity transitions into how staff work with clients. Ask yourself: Do I offer a great client experience? If not, are my processes long and arduous? How can I make things simple?

These tips represent only a fraction of the hundreds of insights that can be pulled

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