

Behind a visionary: The science of Steve Jobs

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msnbc:

The death of Apple's Steve Jobs on Wednesday triggered an outpouring of mourning and celebration. As newspaper obits remembered Jobs as a "visionary" and the "Henry Ford of the computer industry," fans converged on Apple stores across the country to leave notes, bouquets and actual apples.

It's hard to imagine this sort of grief for most other chief executive officers — would the loss of the head of General Electric or Exxon Mobile spur 10,000 tweets per second? — but Jobs had a combination of smarts, entrepreneurship and salesmanship that linked him closely with Apple and its products. Exactly how a visionary such as Jobs develops, however, is still something of a mystery. Social scientists say that talent like Jobs' is neither inborn nor learned, but rather a combination of the two. And while intelligence is key, creativity and charisma matter, too.

"With somebody like Steve Jobs, you're talking about a constellation of personality and intellectual ability factors, and then the role of the environment that he selected for himself can't be underestimated," Michigan State University psychology Zach Hambrick told LiveScience.

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