Steve Jobs, CEO Apple

Visionary

He is known for his perfectionist attitude, even under adverse market condition demanding quick reaction. In 2000 when apple was hit hard, he still believed in the future of apple product line like ipod, itune and macintosh, certainly because he was very much involved in minute details of the products, balancing micromanagement and vision. He can be attributed to:

- Concepts of personal computers, graphical interface and ease of use.
- Revolutionary consumer products like iPod and iPhone, carefully mating the technology with aesthetics. iPhone was hailed as “revolutionary and magical product that is literally five years ahead of any other mobile phone”.
- Concept of company owned apple stores and music sale sites and digital hub strategy.
- 3D animated movies (Pixar)

Leadership Traits

- **Inspirational**: Steve jobs has uncanny following among both the stock holders and the consumers, especially because of his “**think different**” message and ability to continuously surprise and deliver on his vision.
- **Relationship**: CEO that chooses to wear jeans and t-shirt instead of corporate attire subtly eliminates the perception of being at higher level than the audience. He once advised Bob Iger, CEO Disney to build the stores close enough so that he can visit often, massage it and learn from it. His closeness with customers enhances his judgment about what the customers may like or dislike.
- **Communication**: He delivers his key notes that are very well written and rehearsed; his speech articulates the necessary underline message adequately. His personal value to Apple is so immense that financial markets bet on whether he will personally launch the new product or not.
- **Credibility**: He is known to be secretive and does not give too many interviews or public appearances; this strategy though adds to an element of surprise and curiosity but also provides him the necessary credibility. People know from his past that he delivers on his promise and does not create a false smoke screen of distraction and deception. In the backdating scandal that embroiled the former CFO, he apologized and called it “completely out of character for apple”.

Leadership Skills

- **Conceptual skills**: Jobs is without a doubt gifted in conceptual skills, while usual CEOs are focused on the product, its functionality, cost and market, he gave equal focus on the visual and aesthetic appearance of the products, something that differentiates apple products with the rest.

Leadership Style

When he was ousted from apple in 1985, he was often termed as arrogant and bully combined with his perfectionist attitude, something that indicates the “Authority-Obedience Manager”. However in 2009, due to medical reasons, he delegated his responsibilities “Tim Cook, Apple COO” for six months and everything went smoothly. Perhaps because he had mentored his executive team successfully to think and decide like him, this indicates that his style has moved to being a “Team-Manager”.
Reference: Fortune Nov 23, 2009 - "The decade of Steve"