

**Insanely Simple : The Obsession that drives Apple's Success****Ken Segall, (2012, Penguin Books, USA)**

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Ken Segall worked as an ad agency Creative director for NeXT and Apple. He was responsible for that little 'i' that's a part of Apple's most popular product, namely iMac. Segall has also served as a Creative Director for IBM, Intel, Dell and BMW.

This amazingly well-written book talks about the sole factor behind Apple's success, that is Simplicity. Ken mentions that leadership, vision, talent, imagination, and incredible hard work may have just a bit to do with Apple's success, but it's Simplicity that's burned deep into the company's DNA, and serves as a guide for legions of employees around the world. It seems, for Steve Jobs, Simplicity was a religion. The obsession with Simplicity is what separates Apple from other technology companies across the globe. It is because of Steve Job's uncompromising ways, we can see Simplicity in everything Apple does, the way it is structured, the way it innovates and the way it speaks to its customers. Inside Apple, Simplicity is a goal, a work style, and a measuring stick. So, all of this leads to a very good question: When Apple can benefit so much from adapting Simplicity, then why aren't other technology companies simply imitating apple's methods to achieve the same level of success? The answer is: it isn't that simple. Simplicity is not merely a layer that can be grafted onto a business, it is definitely not available in a pre-packaged version, it doesn't work with an on/off switch. Yet absolutely, anyone can take advantage of it, only if they have the determination and knowledge.

For a concept that's supposed to be obvious, Simplicity can be difficult to describe in word. Simplicity is the love child of two of the most powerful forces in business: brains and common sense. Since most people are endowed with both, we would think that simplicity would rule the world. But unfortunately, that's not happening. Over years of meeting with Steve and his marketing team, Ken Segall penned down notes when something memorable happened or a key decision was made. That's how Ken Segall emerged with ten core elements of Simplicity.

▲ First Element is Think Brutal – Brutal does not mean to be harsh or cruel, but just being honest, irrespective of the opinion being positive or negative.

▲ Think Small – Steve Jobs always believed that small groups of smart people deliver better results, higher efficiency, and improved morale.

▲ Think Minimal – Being minimal means, to concentrate or to focus on a single task at one time. Be careful if you are trying to communicate more than one thing at one time, because you are splintering the attention of those whom you are talking to, whether they are your customers or colleagues. But still, if you want to deliver multiple messages at one time, then find a common theme that unites them all, and try to push hard on the idea.

^ Think Motion – Which means to keep things in motion at all times. With too much time in the schedule, you are just inviting more troubles and more opportunities to have your ideas nibbled to death. To explain this, the author has given an example between the work style of Apple and Dell on Pg No. 75.

^ Think Iconic – Ken Segall believes that an iconic image plays a vital role in creating a good impression in the eyes of the public. He says, that whatever products you sell, or whomever you are trying to convince, never forget the power of an image that can galvanize your audience. Actually, it is very simple, you just have to find a conceptual image that captures the essence of your idea. So, over the period of time, the conceptual image gives people an easy way to identify your company, or idea or your product. (Pg No. 87,88 illustrates the idea more precisely.)

^ Think Phrasal – This is an area where just about every business needs more work. Words are powerful, but more words are just confusing. The best way to make yourself or your company look smart is to express an idea simply and with more clarity. In simple words, it means, to use minimal words but powerful words, so that people can naturally associate with your product and your company.

^ Think Casual – The author says, to do as Steve Jobs did, which is to operate in a small, less hierarchical company, which tends to break the barriers between people, so that they work closely together, so that there is no animosity between different grades of people, which increases their productivity. In this case, people don't present to each other but converse with each other, which builds strong inter-organization relations.

^ Think Human – This is perhaps one of the greatest and most important learning from Apple, which is just Being Human.

Sometimes, we just have to think beyond numbers and targets, and connect with human beings with a human voice. Just bear in mind, no target is more important than the human being, because human beings are the most precious assets of any organization in this world.

^ Think Skeptic – Ken Segall believes that one should always be ready to face negative outcomes from people. He says it is not always feasible to try and please everyone around us. We should not get disheartened or demotivated if our work is criticized or not being appreciated. We have to keep pushing ourselves, until and unless we achieve our goals and mission.

^ Think War – The author says that in extreme situations we have to take extreme measures. We have to relentlessly keep trying hard, and not pull back from any situation. That is we have to prepare ourselves to think at war in difficult and demanding situations.

I believe that the author has done complete justice in writing this fantabulous book and dedicating the same to Steve Jobs, who happened to pass away, just before the release of the book. The book has too many amazing things to learn, which we can apply in our personal and professional lives, to make our life much more simpler and easier, rather than just complicating situations all the time. I would advise the youth and the audience in general to read this book, to understand the importance of simplicity and to learn to adopt simplicity in one's life.