

## STEVE JOBS

COMPANY:  
Apple

SALES:  
\$108.2 billion

MARKET VALUE:  
\$546 billion

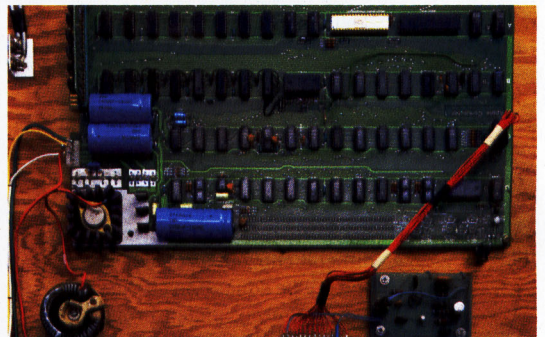
EMPLOYEES:  
63,300

ADVICE:  
Say no to focus groups and market research.

**1** **THOUGH HE COULD BE ABUSIVE** and mean-spirited to people who threw themselves into their work on his behalf, Steve Jobs has been our generation's quintessential entrepreneur. Visionary. Inspiring. Brilliant. Mercurial.

Perhaps the most astonishing fact about Jobs was his view that market research and focus groups only limited your ability to innovate. Asked how much research was done to guide Apple when he introduced the iPad, Jobs famously quipped, "None. It isn't the consumers' job to know what they want. It's hard for [consumers] to tell you what they want when they've never seen anything remotely like it."

Instead, it was Jobs' own intuition, his radar-like feel for emerging technologies and how they could be brought together to create, in his words, "insanely great" products, that



**JOBS:** At the Apple offices in 1984; the original Apple I from 1976

ultimately made the difference. For Jobs, who died last year at 56, intuition was no mere gut call. It was, as he put it in his often-quoted commencement speech at Stanford, about "connecting the dots," glimpsing the relationships among wildly disparate life experiences and changes in technology.

It's a safe bet to assume that none of Apple's blockbuster products, from the Macintosh to the iPod and iTunes, from the iPhone to the iPad, would have come about if Jobs had relied heavily on consumer research.

Fittingly enough, on the day Jobs launched the Macintosh, a reporter from *Popular Science* asked him what type of studies Apple had conducted to ensure there was a market for the computer. In a nearly offended tone, Jobs retorted, "Did Alexander Graham Bell do any market research before he invented the telephone?"

"DID ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL DO ANY MARKET RESEARCH BEFORE HE INVENTED THE TELEPHONE?"

