



The Guy Who Follows the Guy Who Follows the Guy

Tim Cook has his work cut out for him. In case you don't know who he is, Cook is the new CEO of Apple. His predecessor was Steve Jobs. Jobs, one of the most significant figures in business history (some would argue he is *the most significant*) left a legacy akin to those left by Edison, Ford, and Disney. In the aftermath of his death, his legend continues to grow, and, if there were room, his face would be carved on Mt. Rushmore. Jobs has become not the prototypical CEO against whom all great business leaders should be measured, but more of the unapproachable ideal, against which all measures and comparisons fall miserably short.

Tim Cook is the guy who follows THE GUY. I wonder if he wonders: *Am I up to it? Can I surpass what Jobs did in leading Apple?* Odds are that he won't achieve the greatness of Jobs, or lead Apple to exponentially greater heights. I suppose Cook could easily aim lower, expect less of himself, and rationalize that it all made sense at the time, though I doubt he will. Cook could take a lesson or two from Aaron Rodgers.

Rodgers had his work cut out for him, too. You see, Rodgers is the Green Bay Packers quarterback who followed a legend—Brett Favre. Rodgers is the guy who followed THE GUY. Favre won a Super Bowl and led his team to another. He had set passing records for games, passing yards, passing touchdowns, consecutive game starts,

and countless other records. Brett Favre Pass, a street named after him, is a testament to his achievement as a football player. When the career of Rodgers comes to an end, and that won't be for some time, it's likely that while Favre's achievements won't be forgotten, Rodgers will have left a significant legacy of his own as a football player.

Sometimes it's better to be the *Guy Who Follows the Guy Who Follows the Guy*. The expectations are probably lower for whoever follows Tim Cook as CEO of Apple than those that have been laid before Cook. If you're the guy who follows THE GUY, prepare yourself for great expectations. Expect greatness of yourself. Everyone else will.