

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

**To:** Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**Subject:** FW: Office Hours Posts - (Not) A very special post

**Date:** Fri, 16 Nov 2012 02:39:12 +0000

**Importance:** normal

---

Confidential please...

---

**From:** Steven Sinofsky

**Sent:** 11/15/2012 5:58 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Office Hours Posts - (Not) A very special post

Sent from Windows Mail

---

**From:** Steven Sinofsky

**Sent:** November 15, 2012 5:52 PM

**To:** Windows and Windows Live Senior Managers

**Subject:** FW: Office Hours Posts - (Not) A very special post

hey there...I wanted to share one last blog post with you. this has a compendium of all the blogs as well, which folks might find helpful. I would encourage you to share it with folks.

I won't say goodbye, since we'll see each other. But I think a short note is in order. This is also my last stevesi mail :-). Please use [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], or [REDACTED] :-)

It has been an emotional week for us and for the team, and many across the company. I've been completely overwhelmed by the outpouring from all parts of the company. I have been speechless, humbled, and grateful. If you're interested, I am more than happy to share an anonymized compendium of emails I have received. It is inspiring and more.

The announcement by most accounts did not go as planned. But that doesn't really change what the plans were. I needed a break. I need to find a new way to learn from the outside and immerse myself without the constraints of such a senior role. Our plans at home are taking a different course, as you know. The time was just right. The desire for a new view internally is there, as well as the challenges. All of this made the decision "easy".

When talking and mailing with folks broadly, I have been asked a lot about the vitriolic press and how people can rationalize that press, or even just the different stories of my resignation, with their view of reality. I don't have an easy answer. It obviously hurts my feelings and doesn't align with my view of things either. But importantly, I want folks to know it doesn't bother me and I do not think it is something one "corrects" or "addresses". There are two reasons.

First, people can have their opinions and some people didn't like me--internally or externally--and expressed or felt that the way results were achieved by me were anything from prickly to caustic to simply inappropriate. I

can't really change that after the fact. I can only learn from this experience or say that I am not sure I agree. Either way, I have never been one to say that people should not feel the way they feel. That some chose to share those feelings through the press at this moment, in a sense, speaks volumes about those very people and the values they hold. That is why I have remained silent throughout and will continue to do so.

Second, and this is the most difficult one to express, is that what we as a team got done, as symbolized or represented by me, was unprecedented. Not just for Windows 8, or Windows 7, or Office 2007, or SharePoint, or Visual C++, even MFC, or any other "disruptive" project I/we worked on or managed or had a "leadership" role in. There's an element of "doing what it takes in a complex environment to get complex work done" that ultimately requires someone to be held up as an example of the "cost" of doing that work. That shouldn't be, but it is also nearly a universal reality. Normally this type of discussion is left to CEOs and Generals and so I guess I should be flattered at the notion of being tossed into that group. There are not very many examples one can find where endeavors like ours lacked a polarizing leader. In fact, one can find many arguments where this is a necessary ingredient. I won't say I embraced that notion, but I didn't run from the cause or challenge of getting big things done in an always complex environment. I know there are leaders out there that are better than me and I hope to learn how to achieve what we have without the downside some have suggested.

I would always encourage the right mix of "leadership with a cause" and a process that provides voice, reason, and structure to a complex endeavor executed deliberately. If there is an "innovation" that I would be proud of in the projects I have been part of, it is working to create and evolve a process for bold innovation that embraces the need to do more than the incremental and to do it with less chaos and accident than is often the case. Humbly, I think Windows 8 is a high bar for such an approach.

I am so proud of all that I have been blessed to work on. In just 23 short years I have been lucky enough (yes luck) to work on and be part of projects that at the time changed the trajectory of the industry. It would be fortunate to be through just one experience like that, but to be as lucky as I have been is still hard for me to comprehend.

At all of those milestones, whether the press wrote about me as a member of the team or leader of the team, I chose not to put too much stock into the positives knowing that it was always a team effort and we were always subject to the next disruption from someone else. And for that reason I don't put much stock in the flip side of the press or even the longevity of those opinions. You can't fairly accept the positive and ignore the negative. The truth is what we know it to be, each individually. The results as a team are what we can all see them to be, as a team.

In talking with (almost) each of you this week, 1:1 I do get a sense for the challenges ahead. You all understand the known challenges and how to work with them--that's pressure on yourselves that you know how to manage and mitigate. The stress of the unknowns is real. I really want to offer and continue to make myself available to help in any way I can, even if it is to listen. It takes about two product cycles for the knowledge to be "stale" and resulting advice to be generic (based on transitions I have been part of). I absolutely know what you will be going through and while I might not have been successful at working through a challenge without someone thinking the approach wasn't the best one, perhaps as an outsider I will be more objective or more reasoned in an attempt to assist. It is just an offer, knowing that within each of you exists the potential to take things to a new level that I could only dream of accomplishing.

We'll see each other in a couple of weeks after the break. But even then I won't say goodbye.

Happy Thanksgiving! I know I will be thankful.

Steven

Sent from Surface RT

---

**From:** SteveSi's Office Hours  
**Sent:** November 14, 2012 5:21 PM  
**To:** Steven Sinofsky  
**Subject:** Office Hours Posts - (Not) A very special post

[SteveSi's Office Hours](#)

*(Not) A very special post* has been changed

[The entire original message is not included.]

[Modify my alert settings](#) | [View \(Not\) A very special post](#) | [View Posts](#) | [Mobile View](#)

Title: (Not) A very special post

This past week has been a supremely humbling and emotional week for me. I really can't say enough or find the words to express the gratitude I have for the 1000s of emails and other outreach so many have done. It is beyond anything I might expect or deserve.

As I said in the mail I sent, it was time for me (us) to make a choice to take our lives in a new direction. I place a very high value on finding the times and opportunities to learn from other environments and cultures as a way of improving both management and how I approach product development. I started in 1989 fresh out of school and the soaked up Microsoft for about 10 years before I took my first break. The opportunity was an amazing chance to teach students in business school. This was an environment I had never been in using a technique that was totally foreign to me. And the learning was incredible—how to think, how to communicate, how to approach complex problems with no single "right" answer. Then about 6 years after that, I had an amazing opportunity to spend about the same amount of time working for Microsoft full time in China. Seeing the pace and work of the field and the external focus were all gifts that helped me tremendously. The bonus of having a chance to immerse myself in China and Chinese culture was amazing. Along the way I had several great opportunities to immerse myself for short and intense periods in developing market issues—healthcare, housing, mobile phones, and more.

As readers of this blog have seen, I tried to look at all of these experiences through the lens of learning and sharing. So many posts in this blog have been dedicated to sharing