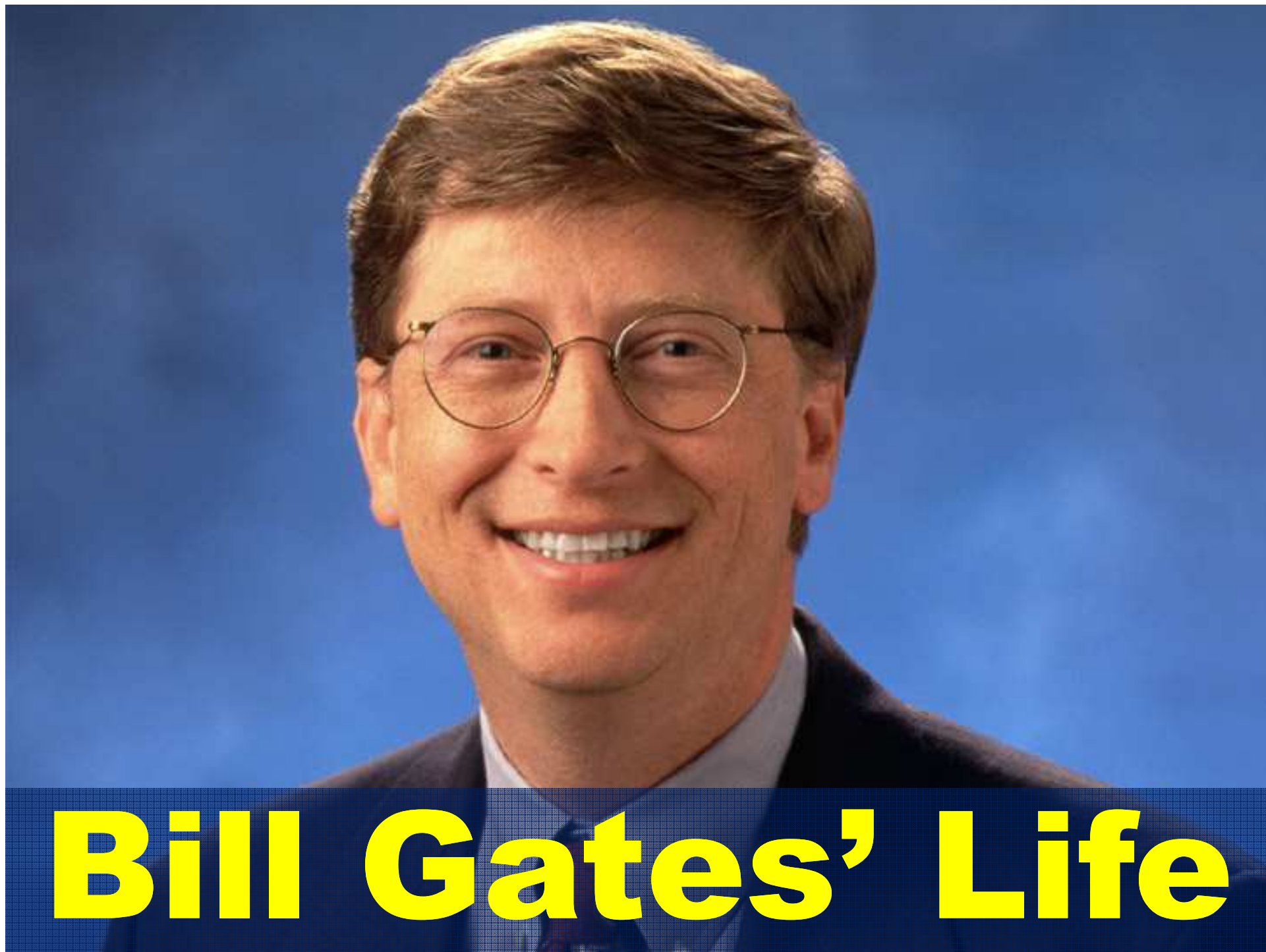




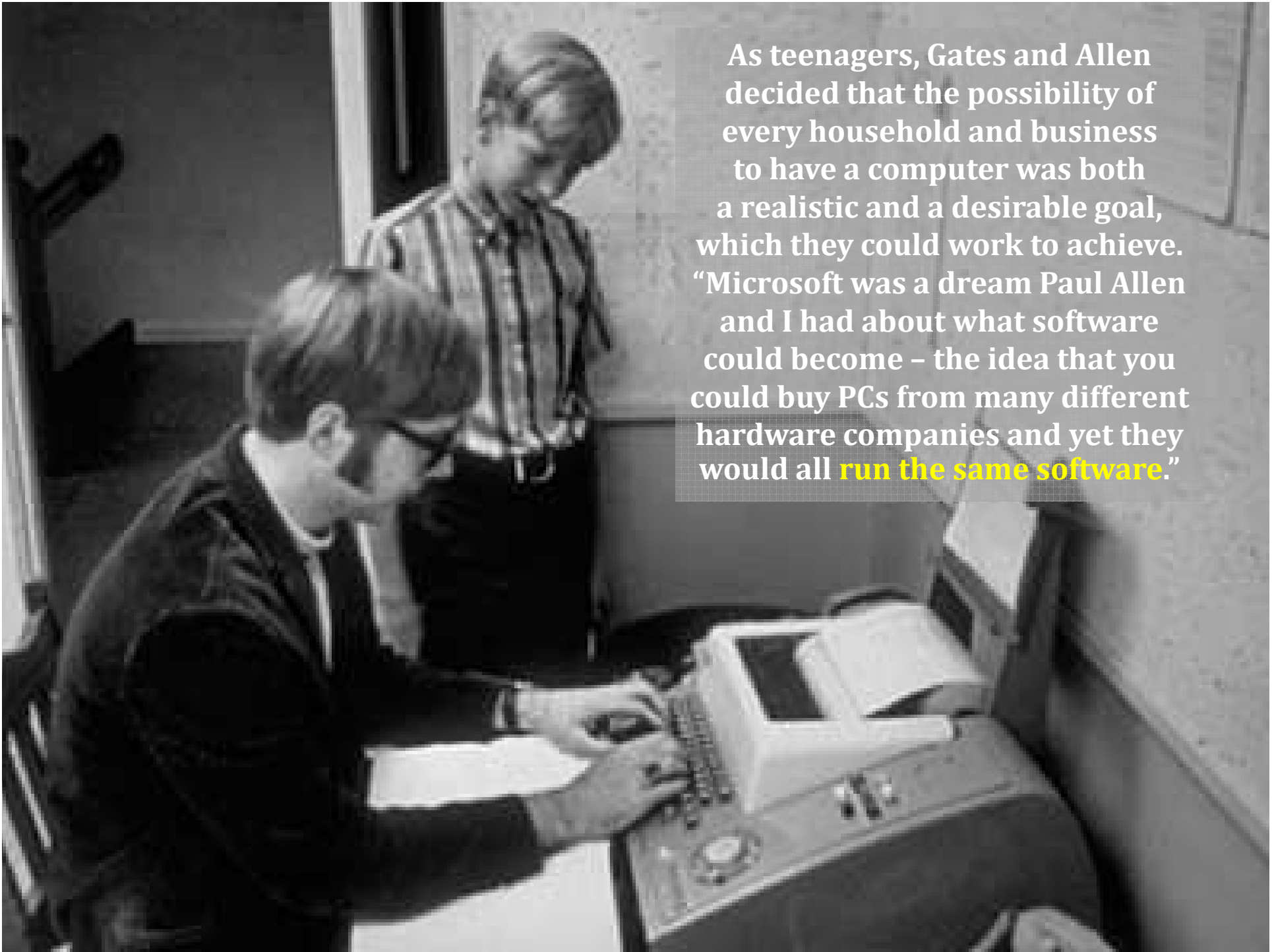
Bill Gates' Life

“It's fine to celebrate success
but it is more important to
heed the lessons of failure,”
says Bill Gates. Failure is
something Gates would see
little of during his lifetime.

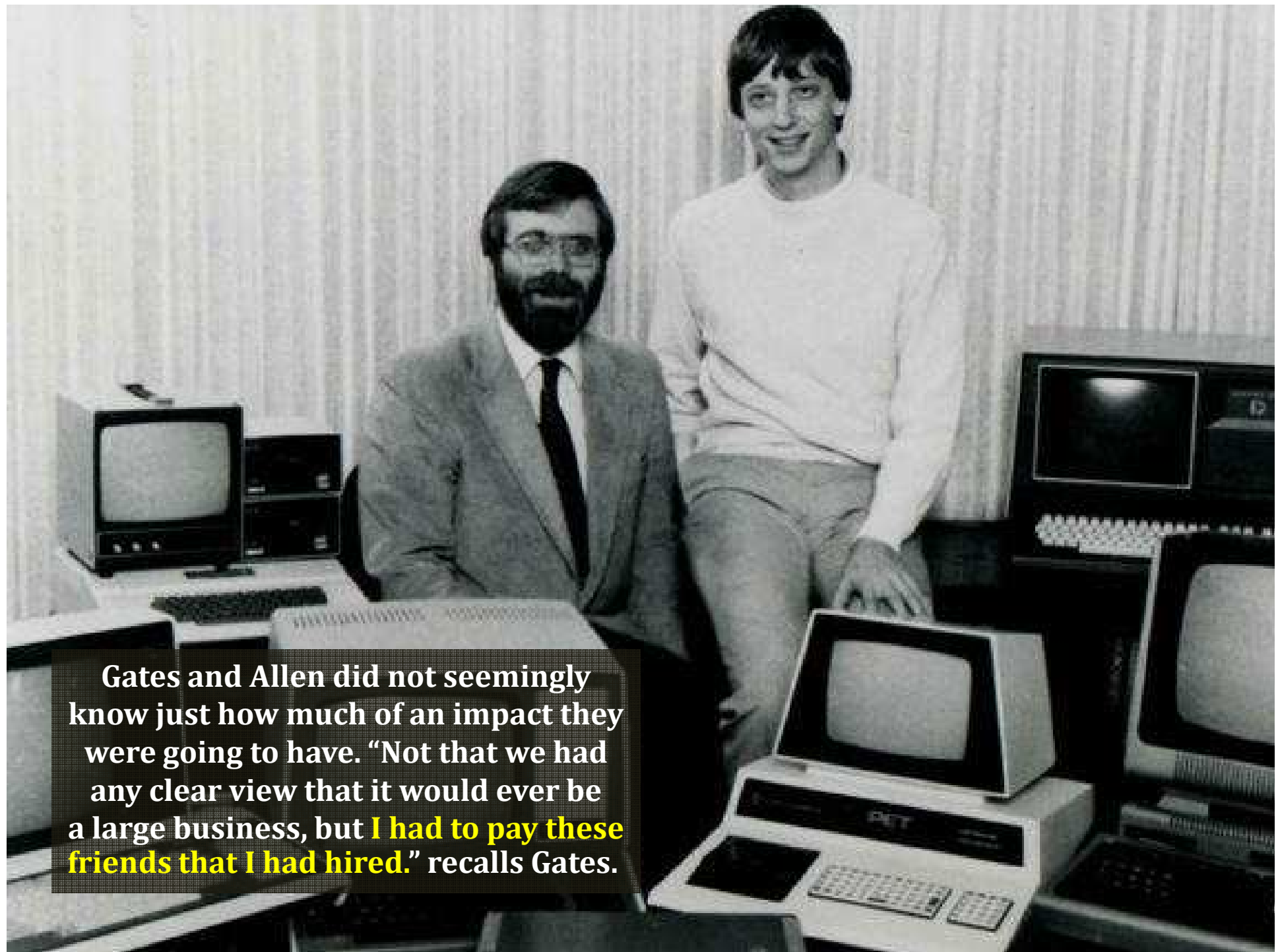


When Bill Gates was asked by Fortune to explain the astounding success of his brainchild, Microsoft, his immediate response was, **“Our vision, which has not changed since the day the company was founded.”**





As teenagers, Gates and Allen decided that the possibility of every household and business to have a computer was both a realistic and a desirable goal, which they could work to achieve. "Microsoft was a dream Paul Allen and I had about what software could become – the idea that you could buy PCs from many different hardware companies and yet they would all **run the same software.**"



Gates and Allen did not seemingly know just how much of an impact they were going to have. "Not that we had any clear view that it would ever be a large business, but **I had to pay these friends that I had hired.**" recalls Gates.

“We always knew that we didn’t want to have a single product that was a dominant product. We wanted to hire in **more software people** and have **a full product line.**”



“We **never saw ourselves as limited**...As long as it was software where development talent was the key to doing it well. And that it could be sold in fairly high volumes.”





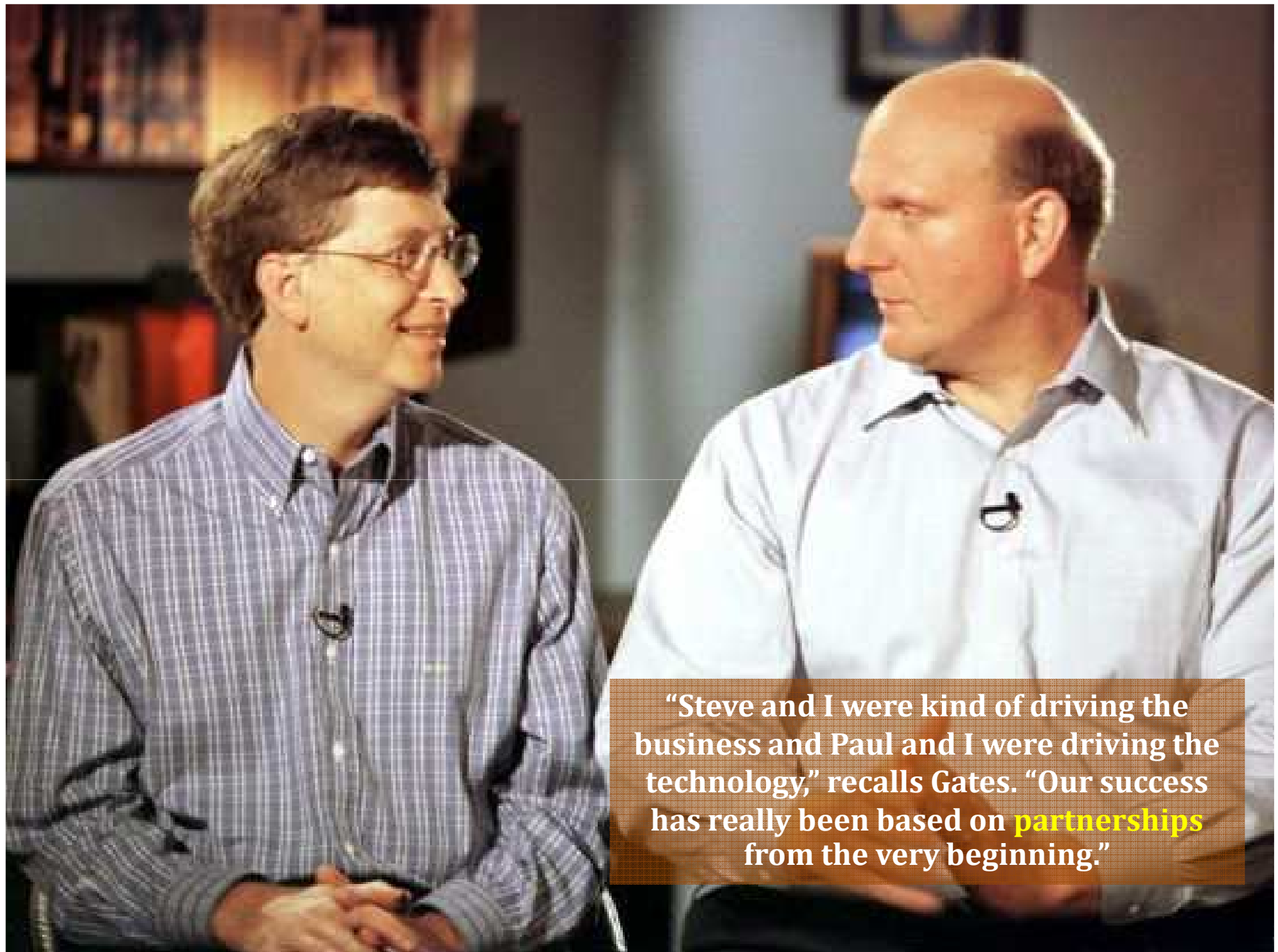
Reflecting on Microsoft's achievements of the past thirty years, Gates says, **"This is just the beginning."**



Gates sees his vision for Microsoft playing an even more important role. “The software is going to have to lead the way and provide the kind of **ease of use, security, and richness that those applications demand.**”

“At Microsoft, there are lots of brilliant ideas but the image is that they all come from the top. I’m afraid that’s not quite right.” While Gates has been the famous face of Microsoft for over thirty years, it took **the help of numerous other trusted individuals** to help realize the company’s success.





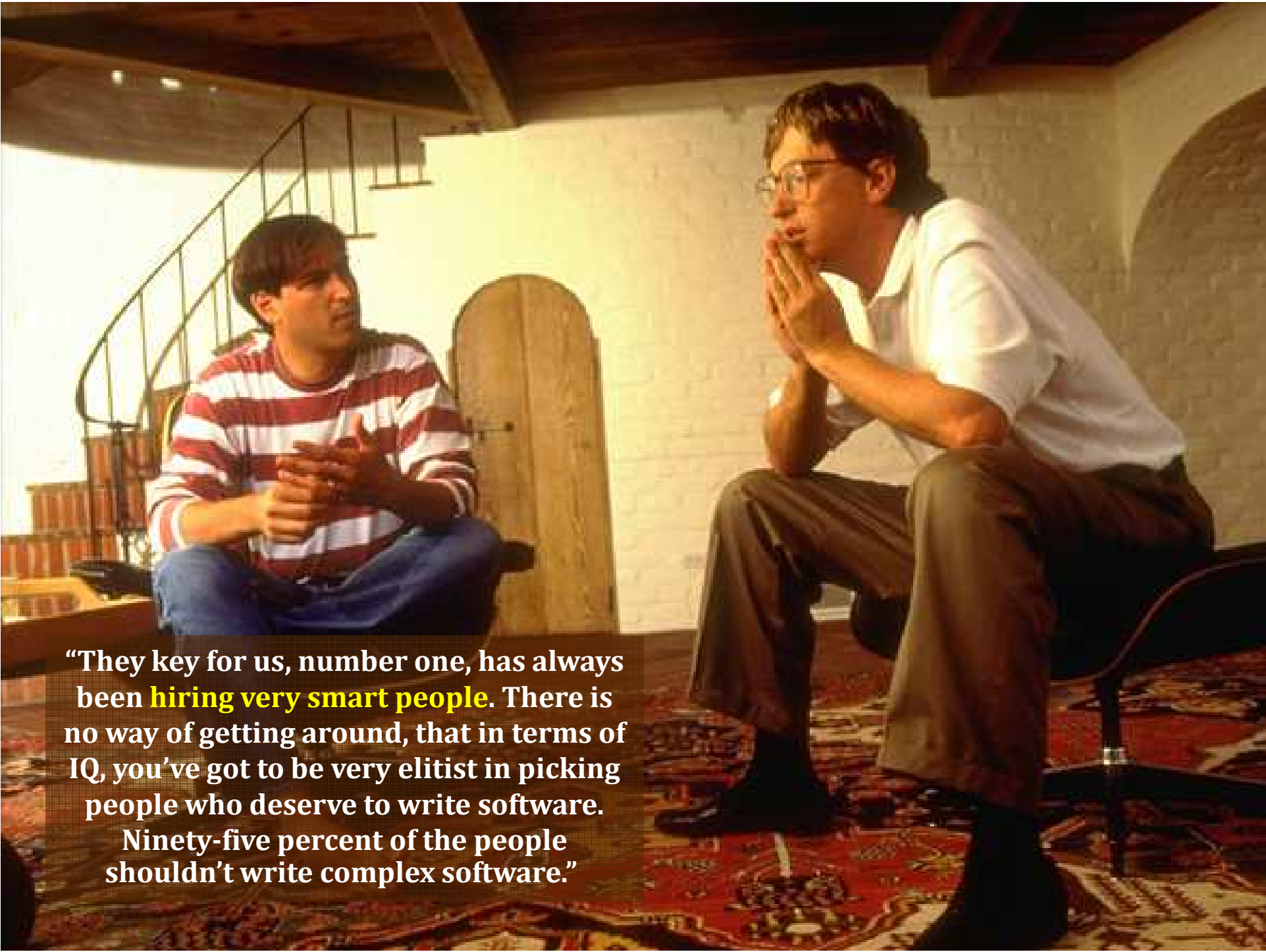
“Steve and I were kind of driving the business and Paul and I were driving the technology,” recalls Gates. “Our success has really been based on **partnerships** from the very beginning.”



“In the world of software a lot of the brilliant ideas of Microsoft come from **a broad set of great people** we've been able to hire.”



“Most of our developers, we decided that we wanted them to come with clear minds, not polluted by some other approach, to learn the way that we liked to **develop software, and to **put the kind of energy into it** that we thought was key.”**

A photograph of two men in a room. The man on the left is wearing a red and white striped long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, sitting and gesturing with his hands. The man on the right is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and dark trousers, sitting on a chair and listening with his hands clasped near his face. The room has a white wall, a wooden door, and a staircase in the background.

“The key for us, number one, has always been **hiring very smart people**. There is no way of getting around, that in terms of IQ, you’ve got to be very elitist in picking people who deserve to write software. Ninety-five percent of the people shouldn’t write complex software.”

Gates had a Solid Team:
“If we weren’t still **hiring
great people and pushing
ahead at full speed**, it
would be easy to fall
behind and become
a mediocre company.”



“We weren’t trying to just go public and get rich. There was no near-term thing. It always was this many-decades thing where there were **no shortcuts** and we’d sort of put one foot in front of the other.”



A portrait of Bill Gates, smiling and wearing glasses and a dark sweater over a collared shirt. He has his arms crossed. The background is a warm, indoor setting with a wooden cabinet and a framed picture.

Gates took a Long-Term Approach: “In the decade ahead I can predict that we will **provide over twice the productivity improvement** that we provided in the ‘90s.”

“Microsoft has had many, many successful products. It’s like saying to somebody who’s been married 50 years, ‘Well, hell, you’ve had only one wife. What’s wrong with you? You think you can do only one?’ I mean I’m committed to one company. **This is the industry I’ve decided to work in.”**



A photograph of Bill Gates speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a patterned tie. He has glasses and is looking slightly to the right. The background is dark. A quote is overlaid on the right side of the image.

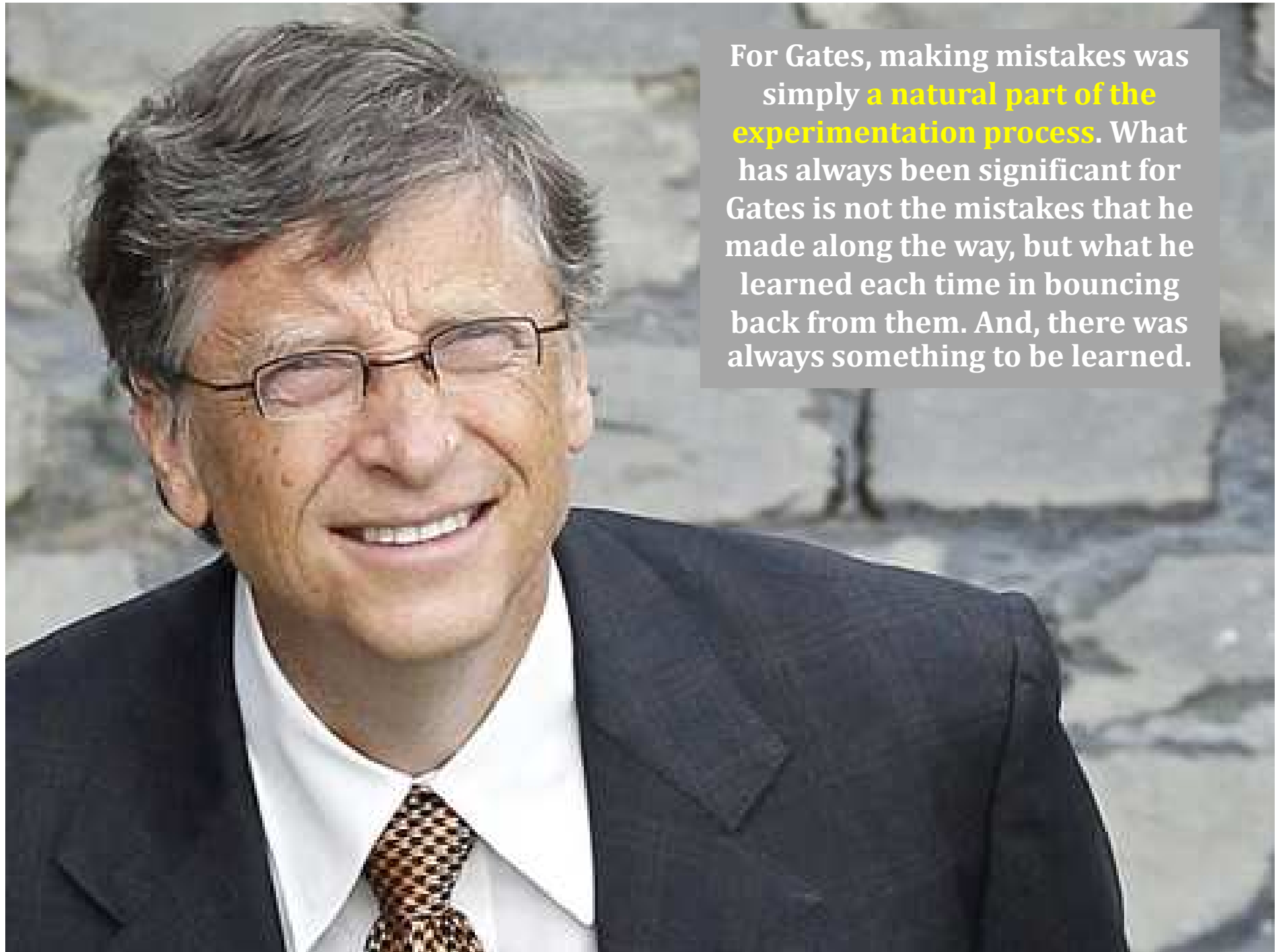
“There were a lot of missteps in the early days, but because we got in early we got to **make more mistakes than other people.**”

Whenever the idea for a new product line came about, Gates would ask himself, "Are we aiming too low, in terms of system requirements...is this another case like Multiplan?" And, it was that mistake that allowed Gates to make "**one of the best decisions**" he ever did. Gates chose to leave the world of DOS and focus solely on Windows and the future of graphical user interfaces.

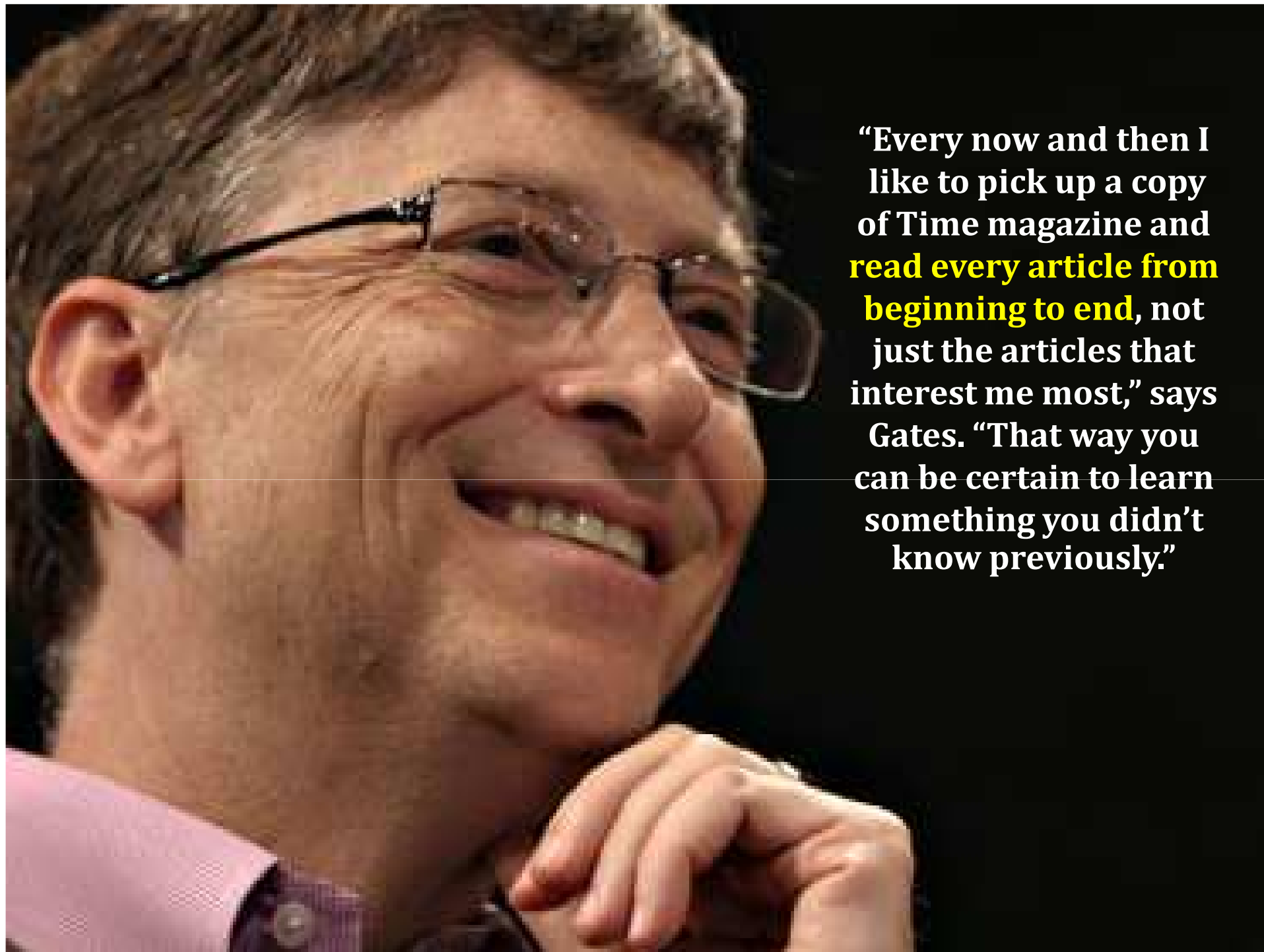


A photograph of a modern Microsoft office building with a large glass facade. In the foreground, a large, white, 3D 'Microsoft' sign sits on a dark base. The building's interior is visible through the glass, showing office furniture and people. A black text box with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Gates regards this as a key mistake, preferring now to take a long-term approach and employ his own people. “You should hire people in all the countries you are going to be in and make sure they are there **cementing long-term relationships** – not just short-term commissions.”

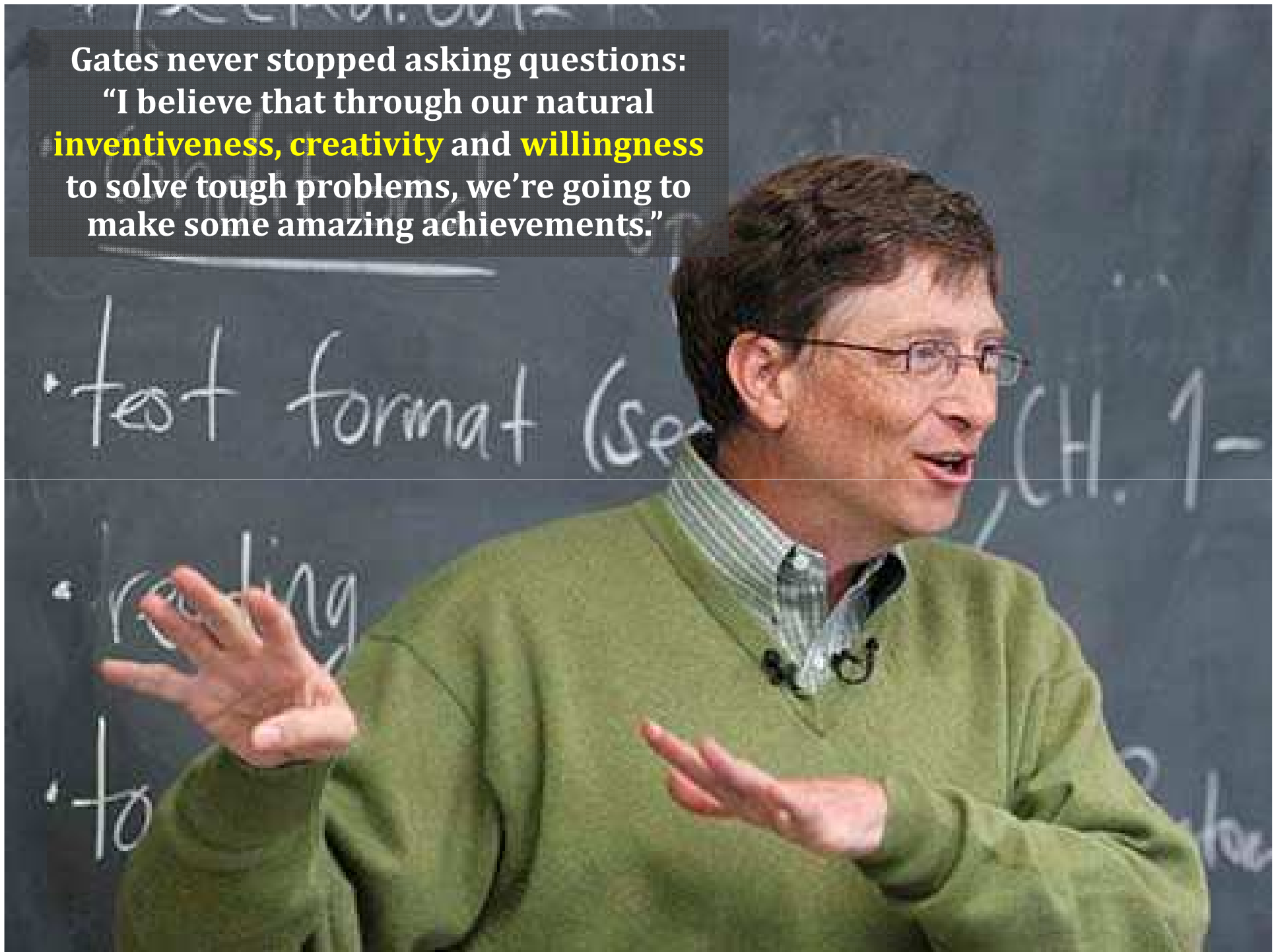


For Gates, making mistakes was simply **a natural part of the experimentation process**. What has always been significant for Gates is not the mistakes that he made along the way, but what he learned each time in bouncing back from them. And, there was always something to be learned.



“Every now and then I like to pick up a copy of Time magazine and **read every article from beginning to end**, not just the articles that interest me most,” says Gates. “That way you can be certain to learn something you didn’t know previously.”

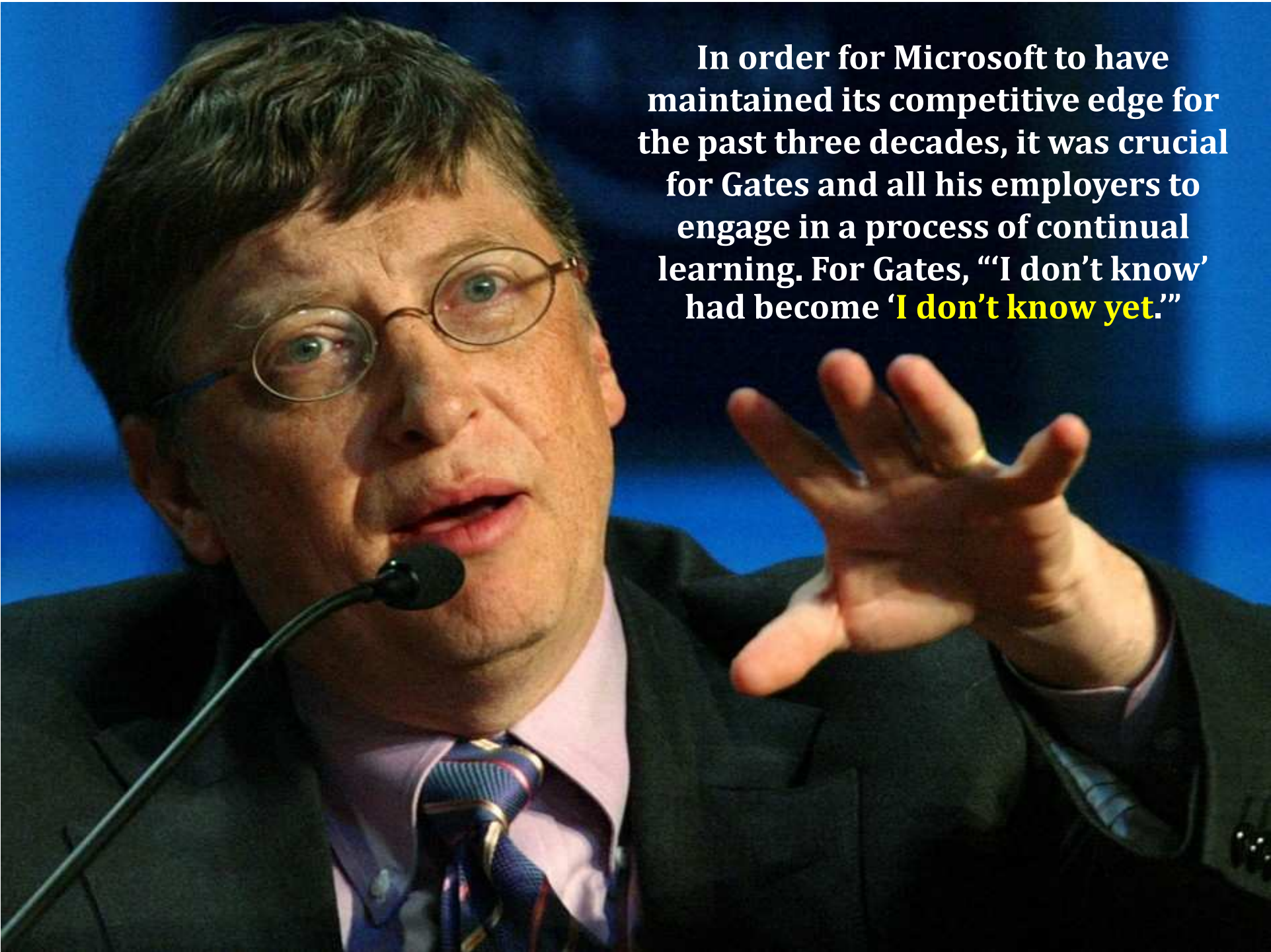
Gates never stopped asking questions:
“I believe that through our natural
inventiveness, creativity and **willingness**
to solve tough problems, we’re going to
make some amazing achievements.”



As soon as you close your mind to the possibility of another reality, you are closing yourself off to other greater opportunities that lie waiting for you.

“In this business, by the time you realize you’re in trouble, it’s too late to save yourself. Unless you’re **running scared all the time, you’re gone.”**

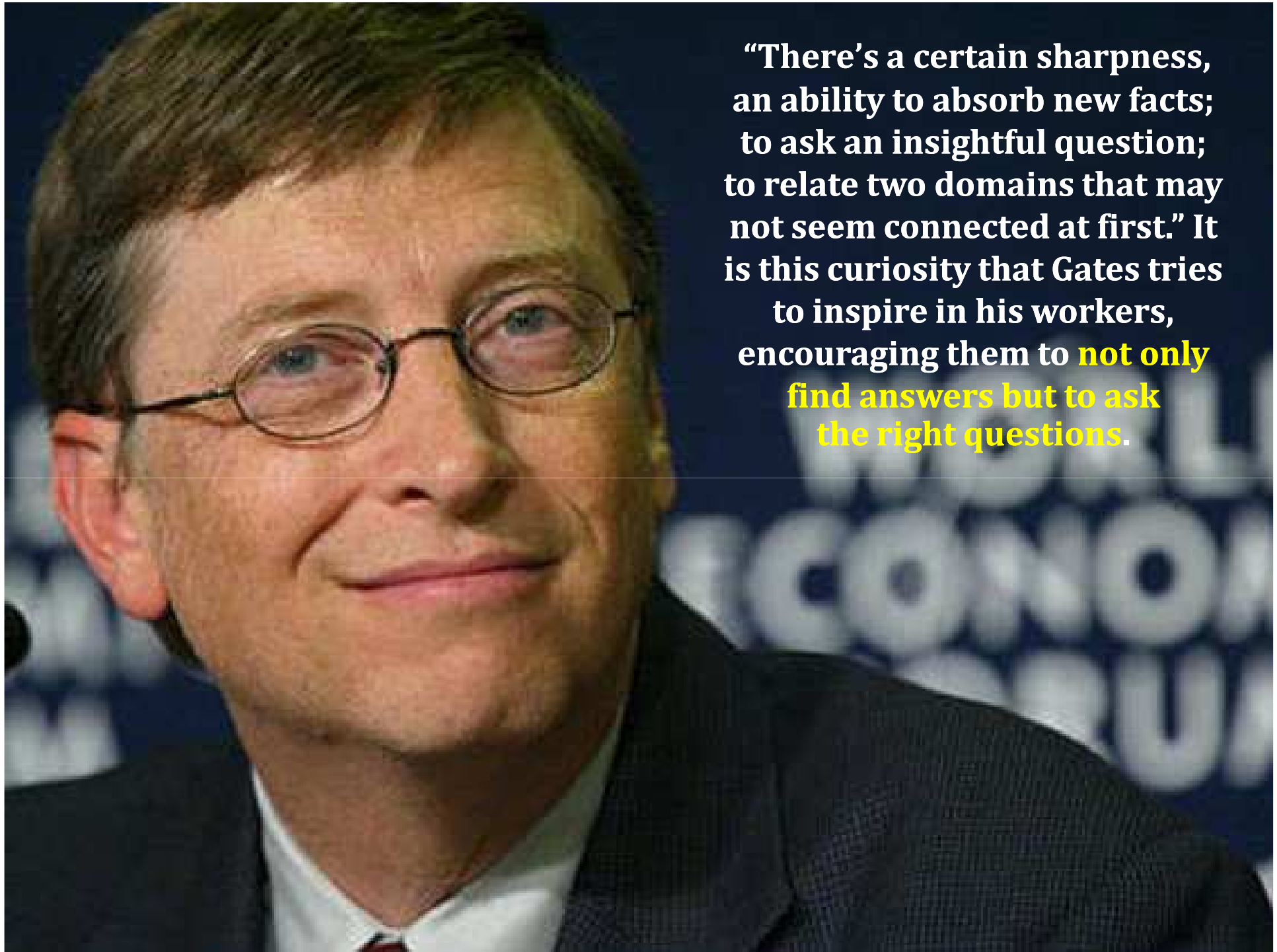


A close-up photograph of Bill Gates speaking into a microphone. He is wearing glasses, a dark suit, a light pink shirt, and a blue patterned tie. His right hand is raised in a gesture. The background is a solid blue color. A white text box with a black border is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing a quote about Microsoft's competitive edge and the importance of continual learning.

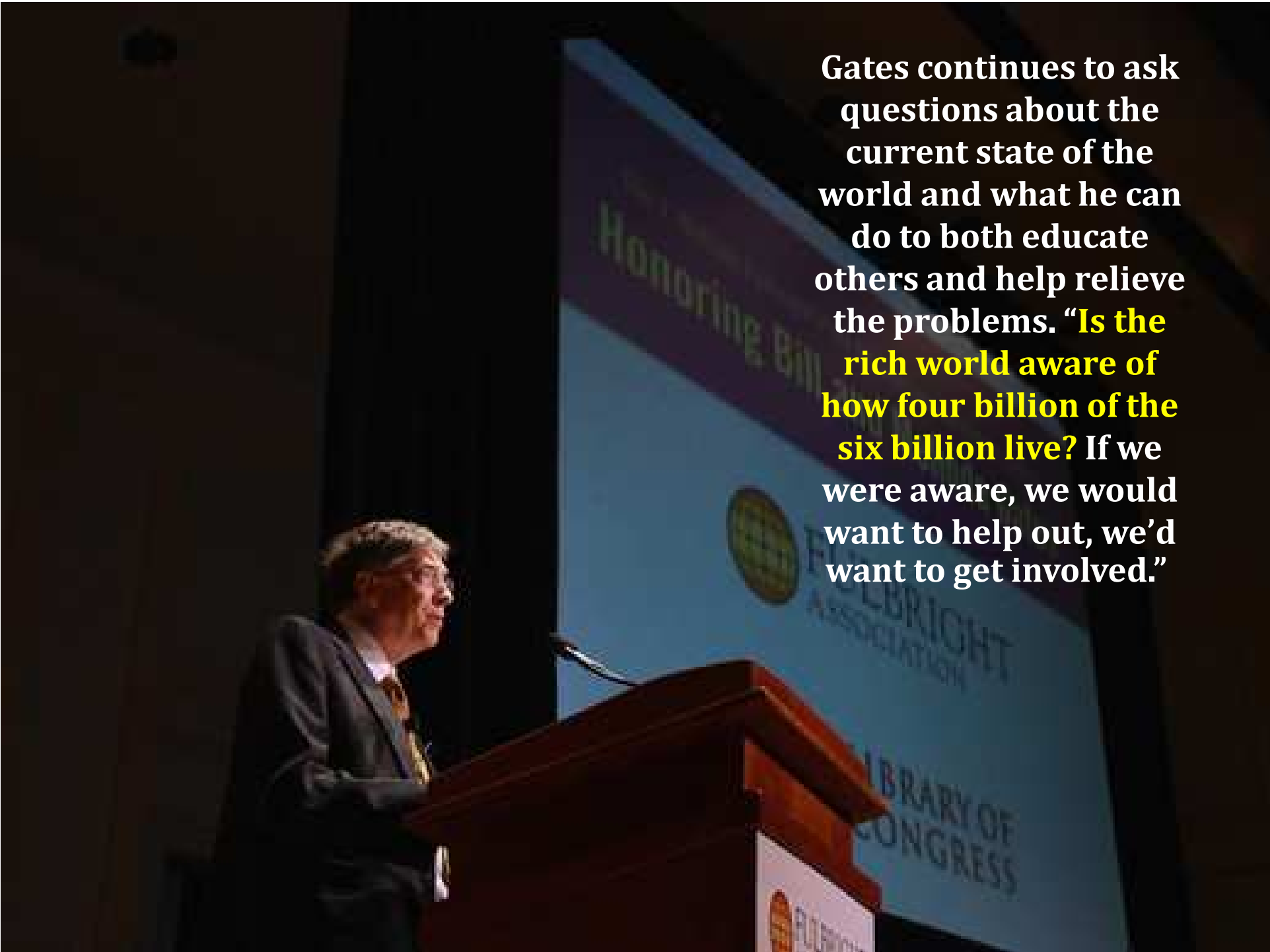
In order for Microsoft to have maintained its competitive edge for the past three decades, it was crucial for Gates and all his employers to engage in a process of continual learning. For Gates, “I don’t know” had become **‘I don’t know yet.’**”

The ability to be open to change and to continue to try and improve oneself and one's business is crucial to success, according to Gates. "People **always fear change**. People feared electricity when it was invented...there will always be ignorance, and ignorance leads to fear."





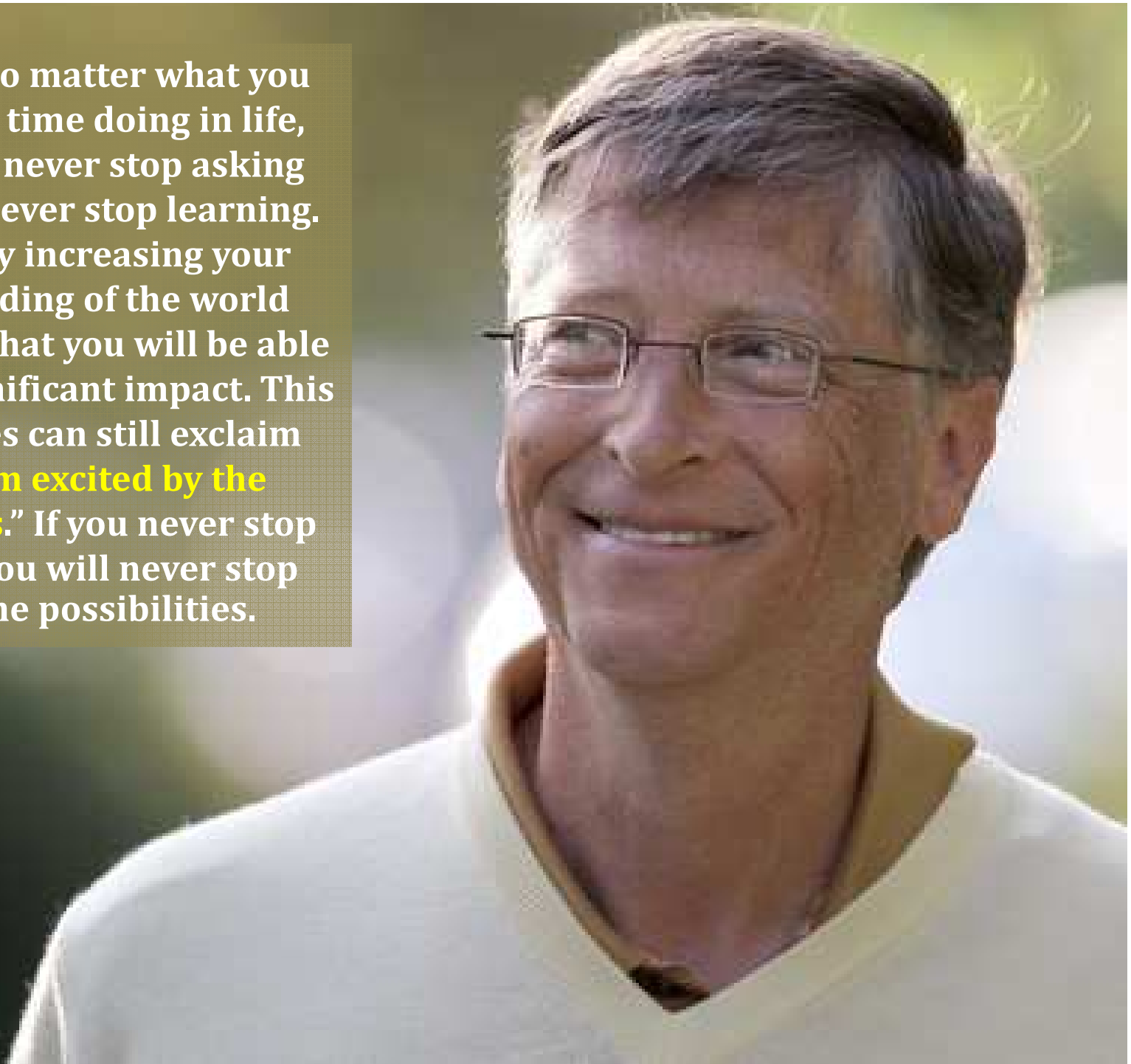
**“There’s a certain sharpness,
an ability to absorb new facts;
to ask an insightful question;
to relate two domains that may
not seem connected at first.” It
is this curiosity that Gates tries
to inspire in his workers,
encouraging them to **not only
find answers but to ask
the right questions.****

A photograph of Bill Gates speaking at a wooden podium. He is wearing a dark suit and glasses. Behind him is a large blue screen with white text. The text on the screen includes "Honoring Bill Gates" and "FELBRIGHT ASSOCIATION". The text on the podium includes "LIBRARY OF CONGRESS".

Gates continues to ask questions about the current state of the world and what he can do to both educate others and help relieve the problems. **“Is the rich world aware of how four billion of the six billion live? If we were aware, we would want to help out, we’d want to get involved.”**

For Gates, no matter what you spend your time doing in life, you should never stop asking questions; never stop learning.

It is only by increasing your understanding of the world around you that you will be able to have a significant impact. This is why Gates can still exclaim today, “**I’m excited by the possibilities.**” If you never stop learning, you will never stop seeing the possibilities.



“If I'd had some set idea of a finish line, don't you think I would have crossed it years ago?” asks Gates. Showing no signs of slowing down, Gates continues to fuel his business, inspire his workers and make his contribution to the global village.

**Thank You Very Much
Sompong Yusoontorn**

