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Best known entrepreneur and philanthropist

Bill Gates is well known for his software business, Microsoft. He founded Microsoft Corporation with Paul Allen, and subsequently became one of the richest men in the world. He received a lot of awards, including Presidential Medal of Freedom, National Medal of Technology and Innovation, Lasker Bloomberg Public Service Award and Silver Buffalo Award.

Gates was born on 28th October, 1955 in Seattle, Washington. He grew up in an upper middle-class family. He wrote his first software program at the age of 13. In high school, he helped form a group of programmers and founded Traf-O-Data, a company that sold traffic-counting systems to the local government. In 1975, Gates and Paul Allen, one of his best friends, saw the opportunity to start their own computer software company. Gates dropped out of Harvard University during his junior year and formed Microsoft.

Before Microsoft became a huge success, Bill had struggled between staying in his comfort zone and venturing into a tech career. Indeed Allen had challenged him to leave his comfort zone and their ventures worked out very well. Finally their business was very successful.

Bill and his wife Melinda Gates were named as the most generous philanthropists as they have been leading in philanthropy for many years. In 2000, Gates and Melinda combined three family foundations and Gates donated part of his stock valued at \$5 billion to create the charitable Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2011, Bill stepped down as the Chairman of Microsoft and managed the foundation. Their foundation focuses on global health, education and poverty. For global health, the couple spent two billion US dollars to defeat malaria and more than 50 million US dollars to fight the Ebola virus. For education, they established the Millennium Scholars Program to provide financial support for students. To help the poor, Gates spent more than 100 million US dollars on the projects which fight the problem of malnutrition in Nigeria.

Bill Gates once said, “It’s fine to celebrate success but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.” His success in business as well as his works of public philanthropy have inspired many people. He was named one of the 100 people who most influenced the 20th century, as well as one of the 100 most influential people by Time in 2004, 2005 and 2006.