

8 LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM HAMILTON



The hit 2015 musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda.



#1: BE ASSERTIVE

We are told that fortune favors the **bold**, and in business, sometimes **big initiatives** are exactly what is needed to build an organization. Think Steve Jobs and Apple, or Jeff Bezos and his decision to build the Kindle and obliterate Amazon's core business of selling physical books in favor of something better.

"For the first time, I'm thinkin' past tomorrow."

"I'm young, scrappy, and hungry"

"The man in nonstop."

"Every day you write like you're running out of time."

#2: BE DECISIVE

Aaron Burr seems to always be waiting for the **opportune moment**. Yet, greater leaders make their own luck and forge their own opportunities.

"Hamilton doesn't hesitate, He exhibits no restraint, He takes and he takes and he takes, And he keeps winning anyway, He changes the game, He plays and he raises the stakes."

#3: BECOME INVALUABLE

We are often asked to give advice to those just starting out in their career. One nugget we often share is to make yourself invaluable. **Find a need. Solve it.** Make yourself invaluable. Hamilton was invaluable to Washington because he could help Washington find Congressional help and support. In some ways, Hamilton was more valuable as an advocate than as a commander.

"From what I hear, you've made yourself indispensable."

#4: BE A DISRUPTOR

Professor Clayton Christensen of the Harvard Business School built a career helping leaders see how disruption is vital to **continuous business success**. Hamilton believed the same thing:

"Rather be divisive than indecisive"

"If you want something, go get it."

#5: BE RESILIENT

Alexander Hamilton did not start off with success assured. He had to **earn it** and overcome a variety of **obstacles**. At one point he observes:

"Every disadvantage I have learned to manage."

#6: DIVERSITY MATTERS

The American founders are not role models of how diversity should be handled in today's modern **business culture**. Yet, the musical itself is a master class in diversity. One line in particular stands out, although historically it is likely inaccurate:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal. And when I meet Thomas Jefferson, I'm 'a compel him to include women in the sequel!"

#7: FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR LEADERSHIP COMPASS

Hamilton understood and followed his leadership identity. He was **consistent** and **predictable**. Aaron Burr, on the other hand, let the moment dictate his style.

"If you stand for nothing Burr, what will you fall for?"

Burr, even changed political sides when he thought it could help him.

#8: EMBRACE OTHERS AND BELIEVE IN ABUNDANCE

"The world is wide enough."

Enough said. There are two basic economic viewpoints in business: a **scarcity perspective** (not enough to go around) or an **abundance mentality** (we can succeed and there will be plenty for everyone). Hamilton was more about the latter.