



## Lessons of a Life Well Lived: A Tribute to Henry Bloch



The passing of Kansas City entrepreneur and philanthropist Henry W. Bloch represents an inestimable loss. His humor, acumen and generosity were exemplary, and his work, *Seven Lessons for Entrepreneurs*, remains a treasure trove of wisdom for anyone eager to learn how to live one's life for others.

Lessons one through four speak to persistence, authenticity, adaptability and timing. The last three lessons are of particular significance to fundraisers and philanthropists who understand the nobility of what we do and the Power of Philanthropy™ to change the world:

### **Make decisions with the customer [others] in mind.**

Henry Bloch, and his brother Richard, did not set out to establish a Fortune 500 company. They began by taking care of other people's bookkeeping. They did it well, and this attracted more customers. They did the same when they began taking care of other people's tax preparations. They did it well, and this attracted more customers. They made decisions with the welfare of others as their guiding principle, and this turned out to be a long-term winning strategy.

### **Avoid pursuing short-term goals that aren't contributing to long-term growth.**

Everyone's busy—sending out one more email, making one more phone call or meeting with one more client. We are, daily, susceptible to the tyranny of the urgent rather than committed to making quality decisions that yield long-term value. Henry's advice is truer today than ever: Think long term.

### **Your legacy is what you do for others.**

After all he did for Kansas City, Henry Bloch still felt compelled to express appreciation to his hometown for birthday wishes he received on his 95th. In 2017, he wrote in the *Kansas City Star*, "Thank you to the people who have meant so much to me. Thank you to the community that has provided me so much support. And thank you to the organizations that make this such a wonderful place to raise a family, start and grow a business and leave a legacy."

Bloch said, on another occasion: "If it weren't for the Kansas Citians who supported our early efforts, H&R Block would never have become what it is today. We did this, not because we had to, but because it was the right thing to do. We knew that business could be more than making money, it could be about making a difference."

Thank you, Henry, for your life's example. You have made an extraordinary difference in innumerable ways, and we are grateful.

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