

## OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

**Professor Allan Wightley, BEng, MEng, Grad Dip (Bus), C P Eng (Reg),  
FIE Aust, FAIM, ASME**

Divisional Director of Technology, Weir Minerals Division  
of the Weir Minerals Group  
Adjunct Professor, University of Technology, Sydney

Delivered at the graduation ceremony for graduates from  
The Faculty of Engineering

Great Hall, City Campus, Wednesday 4 May 2005, 2.30pm

### ***Graduation, a Proud Moment: Where to From Here?***

Graduation is always a joyful and proud occasion, which is often accompanied by a sense of great relief. It's payback time for all the time and effort we invested. In reality, you will come to recognise that it is also an important milestone in your life. For many, it will be the start of a professional career. For others, it may be the start of further studies. I have often heard said that, when I graduate I will: travel overseas, get married, have children, buy a house, get a better job. Hence my question: where to from here?

I do hope that you have planned for your future:

- *Be **interested in the future**, you're likely to spend a lot of time there*
- *Most people **aim at nothing** and achieve it*
- *When you don't know where you want to go: **any road will do***

Your success, be it career or any field of endeavour, will only be limited by your self confidence:

- *Success is **self-created**, so is failure*
- *A **positive attitude is a habit** – the longer you have it the stronger it becomes*
- *The only limit to our results tomorrow will be our **doubts today***

I have, over many years employed, trained and sometimes had to dismiss, many engineers, draftsmen, scientists & technologists - in countries such as Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Holland, South Africa, Malaysia, Brazil, Chile, India. I have also worked with others from Japan, China & Singapore. I can tell you that, my observation is, on average, engineering graduates from UTS are among the best in the world. In graduating with a UTS degree, you should have self-confidence to tackle any engineering task and expect to have a good outcome - provided you use good judgement. The key to your success will be your commitment, your focus & your resolve.

- *You have two options: **be focussed, passionate and productive** or, act like most other people*
- *The simple act of **commitment is an amazing tool***
- *I believe that we **create our own reality**.*

It will require hard work though, so:

- *When you go to work, **take your heart and soul with you***
- *The **extra mile** contains no traffic jams*
- *The road to success has **many tempting parking spaces***
- *There are **no shortcuts** to any place worth going*
- *Success is often just **hanging on** after everyone else let go.*

So, how does one plan a career? You might be surprised to learn that most of life's events can be planned. Do it just like the way we plan for business success. The simple steps are:

- *Have a **dream***
- *Make a **plan***
- *Understand **your values***
- ***Benchmark** yourself against successful people (skills, tools, mentors, networking, etc)*
- *Identify and correct **gaps***
- ***Execute** the plan*
- ***Control** mission critical processes*
- ***Monitor** progress against the plan*
- ***Update** the plan*

To those graduating with an undergraduate degree and are aspiring to executive engineering levels, I am sorry to inform you that both national and international competition will force you to obtain a post graduate degree. Raw talent and effective networking will be unlikely to take you all the way. You will need 'the piece of paper' showing you have something special. It must be in your arsenal of your toolkit.

If ultimately, if you find the rigors of an engineering career is not to your liking, your engineering education at UTS will prove a very solid foundation for other functions such as: sales & marketing, research and general management, but:

- *Be careful what you wish for: you might get it.*

In the meantime, I urge you to become skilled professional engineering practitioners for the good of mankind. Take pride in everything you do. Use fervour, passion & the best skills that you have acquired in this place. Remember:

- *It is the **journey** that should be the reward, not the destination*
- *Never **mistake** motion for progress*
- *No matter how far you have travelled down the wrong road: **turn back**.*

I also urge you to be good ambassadors for UTS Engineering. Why? you ask. Here are some good reasons:

- *Do it for the **University** (enhance its reputation, draw future candidates and attract further funding to provide a better education and research)*
- *Do it for your **fellow students** (for their pride that they studied with you)*
- *Do it for **yourself** (the better the University looks, the better you look).*

The best way to be a good ambassador will be evidenced by:

- *Delivering on your **promises***
- *Your **engineering skills***
- *Your **business acumen***
- *Your **basic common sense & maturity***
- *Your **professional ethics***
- *Appropriate **appearance***
- *Staying **upbeat***
- *The **passion** that you show in you work*

I will close by wishing you luck in your chosen endeavour.

- *But **don't leave** something so important **to luck***

I challenge you to show to the world that my belief is correct.

- ***We are world class.***

Engineers are change agents: ***Have you changed the world today?***

Thank You!