

OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

Mr Peter Fritz, AM

DipTech Science, DipTech Commerce (NSWIT), MDR (UTS),
MINFORMS, MACS, FASA, FIEA, CPA, CPE
Group Managing Director, TCG Group,
Managing Director, Global Access Partners (GAP)

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for graduates from the Faculty of Engineering
Great Hall, City campus, Wednesday 14 May 2008, 2.30pm

“AMONG OTHERS”

Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, colleagues, distinguished guests, graduates,
families and your friends!

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the honour you afford me in allowing me to
address you today.

I come as the spokesman for all those who helped you get here, graduates of
the Faculty of Engineering at UTS Year 2008, when I say —

CONGRATULATIONS!

You are graduating from a fine institution.

I know — as student number 26 in the first intake of the old Institute of
Technology in 1963 I spent 27 years in part-time studies here.

My two daughters, Catherine and Carla, are graduates of UTS and I hope my
son Alexander, who is finishing his school this year, will also follow along with
my grandchildren, their children and so on!

As I was considering what I should be talking about today, I was thinking of
them.

In particular, I looked back at the past forty years of my life in business, public
policy and community work and thought about the definition of success and
some of the things I learned over a relatively long life.

First of all, I must say that I learned that, with perseverance, all dreams can be
made real!

I also learned that whilst life is a personal experience, one does it in company, and if one is to succeed, one should be mindful of one's travelling companions. To me that meant — to be respectful of others, to recognise the contribution that others make and everyone's right to participate.

Life is not an exam or even a series of exams. It is a journey.

Each one of us can decide what level of engagement we want to have with our family, colleagues, community, our country — the world.

In my experience, being an active participant in all that is on offer is exciting and fulfilling.

By all means, one should be ambitious.

We all look up to successful people, but I am afraid to say that what we perceive as success is at divergence with real success.

If we measure our success through externalities, I think we lost the plot. Only through building our inner values can we really be successful.

Many of you have worked in jobs already. Some of you will be looking for work now. Don't despair if you do not land the first job you go for. I applied for 75 before I got one.

Don't despair if you don't land the job you want!

In your lifetime you will have many, and even if you do not change the company, your position will change and, of course, you are engineers, you may even think of setting up your own enterprise.

By graduating, you have proven that you can take a challenge and succeed. You can take a project from start to finish. It was through your own exertion and perseverance that you have achieved this goal, but no person is an island and for me the old saying of "not what you know but who you know" is still an astute observation.

Not that what you know does not matter, but do not undervalue the importance of your network.

It is your network that helps you along and the best way to build one's network is to be accessible to others.

Our society has developed what I call the "furniture syndrome". We respect the title on a person's desk more than the person behind the desk.

Do not forget that the world is transient, which also means that everyone counts. The person standing in front of your desk one day could be sitting behind theirs the next.

So make sure if someone calls you, you return their call, for the caller may eventually be the one behind the desk, figuratively or literally.

Since we live in communities, to be able to communicate one's ideas is really important. For me learning how to negotiate made a big difference.

As I said earlier, life is a journey and it is too late when you see the exit sign to realise that a re-run would be in order.

Therefore, with the exit firmly in my mind, to you at the beginning of your journey — I commend the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson of what to have succeeded in life might look like:

To laugh often and much,

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children,

To earn the approbation of honest critics and

endure the betrayal of false friends,

To appreciate beauty,

To find the best in others,

To leave the world a little better, whether by a healthy child, a

garden patch...

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

This is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

(great 19th century American poet and philosopher)

Chancellor

THANK YOU