

## OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

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Delivered at the UTS graduation ceremony  
for graduates from the Faculty of Business  
Great Hall, City campus, Thursday 8 May 2008, 9am

Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Faculty Deans, Faculty Staff, Graduands and their families and friends, this is a wonderful occasion and I am honoured to be here. I must confess that I am more than a little nervous about speaking to you here today. I know that academics can be very critical and I bet that you know that too. So in preparing for today, I cast my mind back to my own graduation ceremony which was most likely before many of you were born and I still, to this day, reflect upon what was said back then. The speaker spoke to the parents about how they felt on the day their child first started school. He asked whether they knew, as their child passed through the school gate all those years ago, on that very first morning that some day this child would be graduating from university. I think we should all reflect on that for a moment because you've all come such a long way and you should all feel very proud of what you have achieved, either as a parent, a supportive friend or as a graduand.

So now I'll speak more to the graduands. Apart from a solid education and of course the experience that you will gain over time, the most important qualities that you can possess, that will stand you in good stead for the rest of your career is a decent set of values. There's a saying in cricket and that is, "It's not whether you win or lose the game, it's more important how you play". Trust me; it's no different in the workforce.

Most large companies have a published set of values that define the culture of the organisation. To be a team player today, you are expected to share the same set of values as your colleagues. I'll share with you today the values that we have in my company and I think you'll find that these are not too dissimilar from most large organisations.

The first is...

## Quality

We are committed to excellence — in the results we achieve and in how we achieve them:

- Do our jobs right every time
- Focus on what's important
- Raise the bar and deliver continuous process improvement
- Innovate and execute flawlessly

In the Bachelor of Business Degree you would have learnt about focusing on what's important. Focusing the entire company on what's important is one of the golden rules of business. As one of my previous bosses used to say “focus like a laser beam” and I still use that saying in my office today.

## Integrity

We do what is right for our customers, our communities, our shareholders and ourselves:

- Operate ethically
- Take responsibility for our actions
- Follow through on commitments
- Communicate in an honest and authentic manner
- Respect confidentiality

There are plenty of case studies where companies have taken significant short term pain to do what is right for their customers and in return their customers have remained loyal to them over the longer term.

## Respect for People

We promote a diverse culture and mutually respect our employees, our customers and our communities:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Embrace and encourage new ideas
- Cultivate individual talents
- Celebrate achievements and learn from our mistakes
- Foster an environment of trust

- Encourage open and honest dialogue
- Embrace diversity to drive business

The fact is that we are now playing in a globalised world. I remember many years ago when I first started in accounting at IBM, accountants didn't travel. We went from home to work and from work to home – that was it. Many years later at J&J I found myself traveling up to 80% of the time, working with 14 different companies in the Asia Pacific region. Today I communicate with my colleagues all over the world every day. Learning to embrace and value diversity in business today is key.

## **Leadership**

We value people at every level who lead by example, take pride in what they do and inspire others:

- Perform our jobs with passion and conviction
- Bring out the best in people
- Anticipate, plan and embrace change
- Demonstrate personal initiative
- Promote innovative thinking
- Develop talent
- Make the most of our resources
- Improve processes to drive cost efficiencies
- Take personal ownership for results

You may wonder at your stage in your career, how can I display any leadership qualities as I am not yet a leader? Well you'd be surprised at the number of opportunities that come up on a day to day basis in the work environment. The ones who put their hands up to get involved on projects get a chance to demonstrate leadership qualities and these are the ones who get noticed and often find themselves getting promoted.

## **Collaboration — "Teamwork"**

Working together to achieve common goals is the foundation of the success of our company:

We think and work across boundaries

Share knowledge and information freely

Seek input and listen

Take personal ownership for collaborating with others

My husband, a rugby supporter, made this contribution to my speech. It involves the famous NZ All Blacks. The All Blacks star player in the 1995 world cup tournament in South Africa was their massive and unstoppable winger, Jonah Lomu. Before the final game, the team received 100's of messages of support from their fans in NZ. One message from a 14 year old Auckland school boy stood out. That message said, "Dear All Blacks, please remember that the game of rugby is a team game... You other 14 players, do everything possible to get the ball to Jonah and then get out of his way".

The school boy thought that the team's success was entirely attributable to Jonah and no-one else. He didn't understand the importance of the roles of the other 14 players on the team. The reality was that the team would not have been successful at all if it wasn't for their combined teamwork and not the individual brilliance of one player.

Hopefully as you face challenges in the next stages of your lives you will live up to the values that you hold dear, in order to fulfil your own potential in the workforce and to contribute to your communities and to your families.

Thankyou for giving me this opportunity to address you today and congratulations again to each and every one of you, and to your families and friends and the staff of the Faculty who have contributed to your success.