

Chancellor, Belinda Hutchinson AM, Deputy Dean and Head of School, Professor John Shields, Academic Staff, distinguished guests, graduates, family, and friends.

As is most befitting today as we assemble at this place I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners upon whose ancestral lands this ceremony is being held, and pay my respect to their Elders past, present and future.

Today is a very special day for all you graduates and I offer my congratulations to you. This ceremony marks the successful conclusion of a part of your education and is a moment to celebrate and to feel a deep sense of satisfaction for a job well done. For all of you, great opportunities await, and it may well be that those opportunities lie in directions you can scarcely imagine.

Before we go any further, graduates, you have an important task to perform because to the left of you and behind you are the people who have helped you to achieve the momentous task that is graduating. That's right, today is not just about you; it's also about the people who supported you along your journey. Your parents, guardians, friends and loved ones. So please if I can ask you graduates to turn to your parents, guardians, friends and loved ones and give them a big round of applause.

And to you; parents, guardians, friends and loved ones, as is most befitting a graduation of the Business School, you may now also give yourselves a great big round of applause for finally getting a return on your investment!

Now when somebody asks me how my address went today, I'll be able to say that it was interrupted by multiple rounds of rapturous applause.

It is a great honour, and pleasure, to speak today. As I look out over this sea of wonderful eager faces, I'm guessing that you may be asking, what can an alumnus of the Sydney University Law School teach me as a graduate of the Business School? Were all the more interesting people busy today?

To draw a comparison, you may be feeling similar perhaps to the seniors of Wellesley College in the US, who, in June of 1990 vehemently protested the invitation of the late Barbara Bush (a.k.a. the Enforcer) to deliver the commencement address; concerned that she was wholly inappropriate and

notable only because of her husband, George Senior. As I'm sure many of you are aware, that now famous address has been hailed as one of the best graduation speeches of all time.

Rest assured that my aspirations today are slightly less ambitious. However, if you would like to give me a vote for a place in the top million, I won't protest.

I have been thinking however, as my address may come up as a topic of discussion later today, if only to deflect attention from other more painful topics such as HELP repayments; what will you take away from my address today? And no, sadly, it's not the importance of being Batman. Try as I might, I can't take that one away from Michael Keaton. Before you can answer too ruthlessly, let me outline the 3 key themes that I will hope you will take away from today. These are:

- **Always keep learning**
- **Be courageous**
- **Give back**

These are exciting times. Innovation in business as a function of technology is accelerating at a rapid pace and at current estimates 40-70% of jobs that exist today will not exist in 10 years as a result of digital disruption. So, what? Well, for many of you sitting here today, the job you will one day have, does not currently exist. Now, as a risk averse lawyer I find that prospect somewhat daunting, but I bear in mind that I am speaking to our future entrepreneurs, blue sky thinkers and business leaders who (hopefully) find such an idea thrilling. Even in the practice of law, once thought to be resistant to technological disruption, it is becoming increasingly difficult to refute the impending "Uberisation" of the legal profession. For lawyers, naturally resistant to change a day of reckoning can no longer be put off.

The question I would challenge you to ask yourself then is, how can I be successful in such an ever-changing landscape? To my mind, your success will rest upon your adaptability; your capacity to learn, unlearn and relearn; to train and retrain; and to be bold and step out willingly into the unknown.

The good news is that you are fortunate to be part of an institution such as the University of Sydney. A university that pushes boundaries, extends knowledge and is at the forefront in many fields. You will leave here today with the best possible education and with the intellectual skills that make it possible for you to be life-long learners.

Which leads me to my first key theme: **Always Keep Learning**. Which, coincidentally, is one of the values at my current employer, OFX Group Limited, that operates in the rapidly evolving fintech space.

I urge you all from today to make a commitment to life-long learning. Discovery and learning help to bring joy and meaning to life. Continuous learning has been an important keystone in both my career and my life. Take opportunities to continue your education, both formal and informal. Read widely. And have the courage to know that when you have reached a point in a job where you are no longer learning it's time to move on, whether that be to a new role in the same organisation or a new organisation completely or to throw in your corporate gig to launch the next Tinder or SnapChat. We work best when we are stimulated and challenged, so I encourage you to actively seek out roles where you can develop and learn.

A commitment to life-long learning also means that you should always question the status quo and never stop asking why. As adults, we have a responsibility to not only question but also to act when we don't like the answer. Which leads me to my second key theme: **Be courageous**.

In your life and in your career, whatever you do and wherever your path leads you, I urge you to be courageous. Don't sit back waiting for opportunities to come your way or for someone to see your potential. If you wait opportunities will pass you by. Speak up. Step up. Go out and take it.

As you start your careers, you're going to find yourself in situations where, to put it frankly, you have no idea what you're doing. And I'll admit that that describes a number of jobs that I've had. And it's not necessarily a bad thing—it's an indication that you're in a good position to learn. One of the first CEO's I worked with used to joke to me that he often felt like Daffy Duck driving the Titanic. Those words have stuck with me as a reminder that not knowing it all is perfectly fine and encourage me on a daily basis to learn to enjoy being uncomfortable. It's when we're challenged and stretched that we often perform at our best. Now I will caveat that this advice should be taken in context of course and note that I would not deliver the same life wisdom to graduates of the medical school, whom nobody wants to tell them the Daffy Duck story as they're being anaesthetized for surgery.

Courage, of course also means courage to persist through setbacks. Clichéd advice for a graduation speech of course but important nonetheless is that you can't be afraid to fail. In my career and my life, failure has been my greatest teacher. Rest assured. You will fail. Granted, some of you more

spectacularly than others. Failure is inevitable but what happens next isn't. A failure often does not have to be a failure at all. However, you must be ready for failure. Will you admit when things go wrong? Will you take steps to set them, right? Because the difference between triumph and defeat often isn't about willingness to take risks and fail but about mastery of rescue.

**Now on to my third key theme. Give back.**

From this day forward in sickness and in health, through financial fiascos, through midlife crises and passably attractive sales reps at industry conferences, through every difference, irreconcilable and otherwise, you will stay forever graduated from this University and you and your degree as one, "til death do you part". My challenge to you then, is how are you going to live up to being wedded to this exceptional University. Hint, it's not about how rich you'll be in 20 years. The tertiary education that you have been fortunate to receive at this highly regarded Business School will mark you out as a privileged member of your communities and as a graduate of the University of Sydney, it's my duty to remind you that with privilege comes responsibility.

At some point in your professional life an opportunity will present itself to use the knowledge, skills and education you have acquired from this University, in some small way, to assist others. When that time comes and the baton is passed to you, I urge you to take it up, run with it and achieve for others. Your contribution may be made by advocacy on the public stage, in the working environment, in literature and the arts, or simply by conversation in the company of friends and colleagues.

Make it a habit now to give back to your community. Make your service a part of your routine and try to make a difference in the world. And no, I don't mean that you should all move to Cambodia to de-worm orphans. But I hope that you will find some sideline from your corporate/professional lives that will enable you to also make a difference in another way to help others and more importantly to add zest to your lives.

To end, some final life wisdom: Don't forget to "stop and smell the roses". Climb the mountain not to plant your flag, but to embrace the challenge, enjoy the air and behold the view. Climb it so you can see the world, not so the world can see you. Go to Paris to be in Paris, not to cross it off your list and put it on your Instagram page. Exercise free will and creative, independent thought. Don't let your work consume you. Ease up on yourself. Have some compassion for yourself as well as for

others. In a workplace culture that is fueled by stress, sleep-deprivation, and burnout, try to find time to sleep! And most importantly, make time for your family and friends.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of being a part of your very special day and congratulations once again to each of you.

The world is yours. Go and get it.