

Occasional Address

Royal Exhibition Building, Friday 26 July 2019, 5.00pm

Mr Matthew Schofield
Partner, ShineWing Australia

Well thank you Presiding Vice Chancellor Professor Hargreaves for those kind words of introduction.

To Presiding Chancellor Professor Marilys Guillemin, the members of the university council and faculties, all the graduands of course, and to families and friends who have come to support our graduands today --It is a great honor to be asked to speak to you on this auspicious occasion; and to be given the opportunity to publicly acknowledge my gratitude to the great institution that is the University of Melbourne.

To our Graduands, you will find through life that Melbourne Uni will be a great source of respect, a place where you achieved something great and it will be a great source of continuing encouragement if you choose to stay involved as I have.

It is also of course a great privilege to have the opportunity to play a part in this graduation and my sincere congratulations to all of you on getting here today. Today you have all achieved something really significant – therefore it's very important to celebrate your achievement and accept the well-earned congratulations that come your way.

It is also very important to acknowledge success. Because from my experience, nothing of consequence in life is ever easy and in the years ahead, when you inevitably strike adversity, think back on this great success, and draw confidence and strength from it. Let it be a source of self-belief throughout your life whatever you end up doing.

As you rightfully celebrate and enjoy this great success don't forget to acknowledge the people sitting behind you, your family and friends who have been part of your journey, supporting you along the way. If you haven't already, you will one day realise how great their sacrifice has been in helping you to get to your graduation.

From tonight you will be University of Melbourne Graduates and will forever carry the prestige of having graduated from Australia's finest Faculties of Business and Economics and Engineering – and a world class institution respected globally. It is a brand that is instantly recognized and admired by employers and colleagues, and engenders respect for its graduates as being the best and for being dedicated and hard working. It is this dedication and work ethic that will define you so always remember these keys to your success.

Just be mindful though that it's critical to re-invest in our collective Melbourne Uni Brand – our futures and personal brands are only as good as the Melbourne Uni brand going forward. Make sure you stay in contact with the University and give something back wherever you can – your contributions will always be remembered and will open many doors for you.

Tonight I'll leave you with 3 things that I've learnt in life that I believe will allow you to leverage this great educational achievement into great careers:

Firstly remember to always Play to your Strengths and be mindful of your weaknesses:

What does this mean you might ask – to me it has meant trying to identify what I'm passionate about in life and to pursue it whole heartedly. I've found in life that typically I enjoy the pursuits that I'm naturally good at, and I tend to be better at the things that I enjoy and invest my time in. So seek out the job you will enjoy – it's the one you'll be best at.

My Second learning is, Be true to yourself:

Make sure you always have a go – and remember there is nothing wrong with failing, just remember to fail quickly and move on quickly. You won't have failed much in life to date but your work career will be very different to your academic career. Your work career is very much about having a go at everything and accepting every challenge offered knowing you will most likely make mistakes and fail often – learning from your mistakes is what matters. Good employers will always say that there is nothing wrong with making a mistake just don't make the same mistake twice.

Remember to Be yourself and to back yourself– In my career I've gone from being a Partner of the largest accounting firm in the world at the age of 33 to deciding at the age of 36 that I wanted to start my own business and make a difference which culminated in being asked to help establish the Australian operation of China's premier indigenous accounting firm, ShineWing. I went from having a master based out of New York to having a master based out of Beijing. This was a massive risk and polarizing to say the least - but remember - In life there will always be a proportion of people who will like you and consequently a proportion of people who won't - so make sure you focus on the people that like you, and are good to you and always reciprocate their favor.

The important thing is to be true to yourself, and your principles and values.

My Third piece of advice is – Make a Difference

You will often hear leaders in industry talk about leaving their place of work in better shape than that in which they found it – this saying is a basic tenet of life – everything you do in life should include the context of ensuring our world is better for future generations, for our children and their children. Your parents and family here today have strived to do this for you so make sure you are mindful of doing the same for our future generations.

As you become captains of industry and business leaders, as so many of our great alumni have, please always remember this basic human trait – in the words of the great Muhammed Ali “service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth”.

In trying to make a difference – always remember that your principles and values will always make a difference - so make sure you stay true to your principles and you will make a difference every day.

In guarding your principles always be mindful that it takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it.

My Grandmother always said to me “life is what you make of it” or in the words of Benjamin Franklin “God helps those who help themselves” –

So to make your own luck in life, stay true to the attributes of hard work, perseverance and resilience that have got you here tonight - and I’m sure you will all experience great and fulfilling careers.

So in finishing I will reiterate my congratulations to you on your great achievement tonight - and encourage you to stay involved with this great University whenever you can – it will provide a guiding light throughout your careers.

Thankyou

Vice-Chancellor’s Introduction

This afternoon we are fortunate to have as guest speaker a Melbourne alumnus who has gone on to become a Partner at Shinewing Australia – the Australian branch of China’s largest indigenous accounting firm, Shinewing.

Matthew graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne in 1995.

In the years since, he has become a registered auditor with many years’ experience, as well as an expert on doing business with Asia.

Matthew is an energy and resources specialist and the Leader of ShineWing Australia’s Energy, Resources and Utilities Industry Group.

In his spare time he engages in Chinese Studies at the Confucius Institute, and is a keen follower of the Melbourne University Cricket Club, having been a past player and Director of Cricket at the University.

It is a pleasure to invite him to speak this afternoon. Please welcome Matthew Schofield.