

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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AT

**NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NUST) FIRST AUTUMN
GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR THE FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

ON

28 APRIL 2016

AT

8H30

AT

SAFARI COURT HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

WINDHOEK

Director of Ceremonies

Vice-Chancellor of the Namibia University of Science and Technology, Prof Tjama Tjivikua

Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Dear Graduands

Academic and Administrative Staff of the Namibia University of Science and Technology

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning. It is a privilege and honour to be asked to deliver a keynote address at this auspicious occasion of the First Autumn graduation of the Namibia University of Science and Technology. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prof Tjama Tjivikua for having extended this invitation to me to spend time with you. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate Prof Tjivikua and the university community for having attained the status of a university, which is a significant milestone for the development of higher education in Namibia.

Equally, I would like to commend the University for the excellent work it is doing. I am reliably informed that 751 candidates will be receiving their awards in various Management disciplines. There is no doubt that these are important fields particularly in a developmental country that is faced with mega challenges of poverty and hunger, inequality and unemployment and seeks to achieve economic prosperity. It is small wonder that just over a month ago the President of the Republic of Namibia, HE Dr Hage Geingob unveiled ***the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP)***, which is a blueprint for Government's action towards prosperity for all Namibians. One of the five pillars of the HPP is economic advancement.

Director of Ceremonies

Graduates, I will not further bother you by giving you more philosophical information which you have been hearing during your whole academic career which I believe that 95 percent of it you are anyhow forgetting. A wise person once said the following and I quote: **“Tell me” and I will forget, “Show me” and I will remember, “Involve me” and I will understand.**

Dear Graduates, as you are sitting here, awaiting to be conferred with your various qualifications I am sure that some of you are sitting with your pens ready to write down the formula of how to produce the silver bullet for success and which does everything to perfection. Unfortunately, I am going to disappoint you as there is no single formula to succeed in life.

As from today, when you embark on the second leg of your journey, what you need to do is to go and find yourself a mentor who will coach and involve you so that you can understand what success is all about and what it takes to succeed. Forget about the myth which you have been told and read so far that, immediately after graduation you will become entrepreneurs and start your own businesses. It is simply not true.

Therefore let me tell you a short story how I went about to find my mentor:...

In conclusion I would like to present you with two examples which will emphasise my opening statement when I said you have already forgotten almost 95 percent of the things you have learned.

The first example is about a **Pencil Maker** who said the following to a **Pencil**. There are 5 things you need to know before I send you out into the world:

Firstly, you will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in someone’s hand. Dear Graduates in your context that someone should be your **mentor** and **coach** I have been referring to.

Secondly, you will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, but you will need it to become a better pencil. Dear Graduates you will also experience the same sharpening in your journey from now on but remember that what does not kill you makes you stronger.

Thirdly, you will be able to correct any mistakes you might make. It is also true that as you are still youthful, be ready to make mistakes and take risks while you are trying to do the correct things because the only biggest mistake you can make is by doing nothing.

Fourthly, the most important part of you will always be what is within you. This means remember to be truthful to yourself by keeping your morals and your integrity high all the time. And lastly, **every surface you are used on, you must leave your mark. No matter what the conditions are, you must continue to write.** That means do not believe in the lie that it is too late for you to make it. The best time to plant a tree which could have given you fruits today was 20 years ago and the second best time is right now. Even if you have wasted time and missed opportunities, it is never too late to get started.

Change your strategies if you have to but don't quit. Change your style and your approach, the way you dress, do whatever you need to do, but don't give up. It's ok to be discouraged and feel tired but never quit. When you give up, even God cannot help you! The next time thoughts of giving up crossed your mind; respond by saying **"Me? Give up? Never!"**

The second example is about **Jack Ma**, one of the world richest billionaire and the **founder of Alibaba** who said the following.

Firstly, before you reach the age of 25, be a good student and learn everything in a good Institution. Like what you have done at your University. **Secondly**, before you reach the age of 30, go to a small company because normally in big companies you learn processing as you become part of a big machine. But when you go to a small company, you learn the passion and you become part of a dream and get exposed to a lot of things at one time. Remember what is important is not which company you join, but which boss you follow, because a good boss teaches you a lot of things and differently at one time.

Thirdly, before you reach the age of 40, it is then that you need to focus and think carefully about your next step which is: (a) Would you like to start your own company and become an Entrepreneur and work for yourself (b) or Would you like to continue and work for your boss and grow within that company (c) or Would you like to join another company.

Fourthly, between the ages of 40 and 50, you have to do all the things that you are good at. Don't try to jump and learn new things as it is already too late for you to learn new things.

Fifthly, between the ages of 50 and 60, invest in young people, train them and make sure that they are good at what they are doing as they have the energy to carry your dreams to another level.

Lastly, after 60, spend time on yourself and do those little things which you could not do while you were chasing your dreams.

I thank you.