

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY GRADUATION CEREMONY

15 DECEMBER 2021 | REMARKS TO GRADUANDS

LEONIE CLYNE OAM on response to the Honorary Award of Doctor of the University

I welcome into the heart of this University, today's Graduands from Business, Government and Law, and Humanities and offer my sincere congratulations on this special occasion, during which I have the privilege to have been asked to say a few words to you as you embark on the next exciting stage of your careers.

After leaving school, I enrolled as a first-year student at Flinders University in February 1973 along with Robert, whom I married a year later. Today, we are here to enjoy and reflect on an amazing journey and the significant part this University played in our lives.

Forty-nine years ago, a young University was building and forging its reputation and the campus was physically a very different place, particularly with the magnificent developments in recent years and those just announced by our Vice Chancellor. But Flinders' ethos of inclusiveness, excellence and being 'brave', has not changed. Although offered placements elsewhere, we wanted the best of tuition and to be guided by outstanding academics in the fields in which we had chosen to study.

Although I studied psychology and science, it was not to be the professional path I followed, but my studies shaped my thinking for business ventures ahead. I chose Flinders for its spirit and sense of adventure, the University following in the footsteps of its great namesake Captain Matthew Flinders. Entering the Police Force as an opportunity to experience life, or breaking into the fiercely competitive clothing industry were not easy choices, but I had been prepared for the challenge by my experiences here.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly reflect on a few key principles and strategies that I followed during my 34 years in Industry and whilst serving on various boards.

Unlike many of those in the rag trade, when I began my company in 1988, I had no experience and was a newcomer who could barely thread a needle. However, I had a vision, a passion to create and desire to succeed. I needed to

rely on technicians and develop a knowledgeable, capable, dedicated and harmonious team around me. This is called collaboration.

Plan well and strategize the future. There are always risks to be taken but they must be measured and managed.

Keeping control, managing and understanding company finance is crucial.

Learn from failure, it can be a remarkable 'teacher'. Knowledge is a key to success. So is innovation and adapting to change. Like Flinders University, you must always grow and evolve.

Treat staff, clients, customers and suppliers respectfully and honestly, as they are all important components of the life force of a business. This is called integrity.

Know your strengths but understand your weaknesses, and look after yourselves. Treasure your health and wellbeing. A good work-life balance, is essential.

As a proud alumnus, I warmly thank Flinders for my wonderful journey filled with opportunities, challenges, memories and friendships, and I encourage our graduands of today, to take the opportunity to remain engaged with this wonderful University

Be brave, have courage and in the spirit of Flinders University, be Fearless.