



Speech Notes for Founder and Executive Chairman – Frank Seeley AM

3:00pm - 17 April 2018

Flinders University

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, members of the College,

Ladies and Gentlemen, and **especially**, those

graduating today.

To **YOU**, I offer hearty congratulations!

It is an **honour** and a **great** pleasure to be invited to share this very special occasion with you.

Today, is an exciting **milestone** where graduands, friends and family, and College staff, can savour a sense of **real accomplishment**.

As you embark on your future career, I challenge you to take what you have learned in this great university, and **embrace** your future careers, with **passion**, with **high hopes**, and with what might now **seem** to be, **IMPOSSIBLE dreams**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to tell you a **STORY**:

My father died when I was 9.

My mother, who had not had to work for 25 years, went back to teaching, to keep together the body and soul of a surviving family of 9.

She did a **marvellous** job, and without **ever**, a single word of complaint! But financially, things were tight - **very** tight! **So**, if I wanted pocket money, I had to **earn** it by weeding other people's **gardens**, and washing other people's **windows**.

That's when my business training began, and by age 15, it had progressed to where I was selling advertising on commission, and earning up to **\$380 pounds per week**, during school holidays.

Later, I trained as a teacher, and taught at Port Adelaide Primary and I coached the **football team**. So I can **truly say "I coached the Port Adelaide football team also!"**

Unfortunately, I had the **doubtful** distinction of **never having won a single match in 3 years!**

I left teaching to go full-time into commission selling with an older brother, who had been my **friend and mentor**, after my father's death.

It was during **this** time, that we started selling **portable coolers**. 18 months into doing this, my brother passed away very tragically, at the age of 35, leaving a wife and 6 children.

This meant that at 27, I suddenly had the responsibility of providing for 2 women and 10 children.

Having built the business to a million dollars turnover – which in 1972, was a **good sized business**, - I had the rug pulled from under me. So my wife, Kathy, and I decided to **make our own coolers!**

In year 1, we made 1000 coolers.

In year 10, we made 150,000!

In year 3, we had **TWO** factory fires **in 5 weeks!**

In year 17, we had **\$5 million US dollars** worth of

product **stolen** from us.

That was when interest rates were at 18%.

Our **then** bankers decided to inflict a further penalty rate of 7%, so we were paying **25% interest!**

You know, it's said that bankers give you an umbrella when the sun is shining, and take it away, when it starts to rain! However, I am pleased to say that I have seen no such propensity with our **present** bankers!

Why am I telling you all of this? It's **not** that I crave **sympathy** – it's to **demonstrate that in the school of hard knocks**, it's the **bad things** that bring out the **best things in us** – **provided**, we have the **right attitude** – which is, and I quote **"an attitude of GRATITUDE!"**.

St Paul had it – he said, **"in all these things we more than conquer** through him that has loved us".

And **that's** the **only way** that we have survived what life has thrown at us, over the past 46 years!

So you, who are **all** about to become graduates – welcome to your **next new challenge!** Whether you're headed for academia or industry or commerce, or public service I **wish** you **every success.**

HOWEVER, achieving that success, **will** depend **entirely** on **how you FARE,** as an **over-comer,** in **transforming PROBLEMS** into **OPPORTUNITIES** in the **Post-Graduate School of LIFE.**

Once again, **hearty congratulations** to all of the wonderful new graduates.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in

acknowledging every one of them **again!**

Applause

Thank you very much, I will now be able to say that my speech had unanimous and tumultuous applause!

Ladies and Gentlemen, one final thing. I am delighted to announce the **Seeley International HVAC scholarship** of \$5,000 dollars per year. You will hear more about this later.

Thank you Ladies and Gentleman