

Occasional Address University of South Australia Graduation Ceremony

3.00pm Thursday 26th March 2015

Adelaide Convention Centre

Jim Howard AM RFD

B Ec MBA FAIM FAICD

GOOD AFTERNOON TO YOU ALL AND ESPECIALLY TO THOSE GRADUATING TODAY.

MAY I COMMENCE BY ADDING MY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE NEW GRADUATES.

I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO SPEAK WITH YOU HERE TODAY,

TO **YOU**, WHO ARE THE NEXT GENERATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.

YOU ARE OUR FUTURE LEADERS IN HEALTHCARE IN AUSTRALIA.

THIS AFTERNOON I WILL TALK TO YOU ABOUT THREE THINGS;

1. CAREER PATHS
2. LEADERSHIP
3. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

CAREER PATHS

YOUR CAREER PATHS WILL NOT ALWAYS BE A STRAIGHT LINE.

CIRCUMSTANCES WILL THROW UP OPPORTUNITIES, PROBLEMS WILL OCCUR, TIMINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT THAN YOU IMAGINED, AND LIFE WILL SOMETIMES GET IN THE WAY.

IN THE HEALTH SECTOR, MUCH FUNDING FOR SERVICES IS DOMINATED BY GOVERNMENTS BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL AND THE HEALTH INSURERS. FUNDING WILL BE AN ONGOING ISSUE WITH OUR AGING POPULATION AND THE MODELS WE SEE FOR THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE FUTURE MAY WELL BE DIFFERENT TO THE MODELS OF TODAY.

BUT QUITE OFTEN FROM PROBLEMS COME OPPORTUNITIES, OPPORTUNITIES TO GO IN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT DIRECTION WITH YOUR CAREER, OR OFF ON AN INTERESTING TANGENT OR EVEN WORK IN ANOTHER FIELD, SO KEEP AN OPEN MIND.

YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR TECHNICAL TRAINING, WHICH IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILL SET.

AS YOU MOVE FORWARD IN YOUR CAREERS, ONE OF THE GREAT SKILLS YOU NEED TO ACQUIRE IS WORKING WITH PEOPLE, MANAGING PEOPLE AND LEADING PEOPLE.

AS YOU MOVE THROUGH YOUR CAREERS, IN EACH JOB YOU DEVELOP A SET OF SKILLS. WHEN YOU GO TO A NEW POSITION, TO ANOTHER ORGANISATION OR MOVE TO ANOTHER DISCIPLINE YOU BRING A KITBAG OF THE SKILLS YOU HAVE LEARNT WITH YOU.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS BE ADDING VALUE IN THE ROLE YOU ARE IN, BUT ALSO AT THE SAME TIME BE ADDING TO YOUR KITBAG OF SKILLS.

SO IN YOUR CAREER BE OPEN AND AGILE FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL PRESENT THEMSELVES IN A CHANGING WORLD AND KEEP PERSERVERING.

LEADERSHIP

ONE OF THE IMPORTANT SKILLS TO LEARN IS THE ABILITY TO WORK WITH PEOPLE. WORKING WITH PEOPLE IS A SKILL THAT DOES NOT HAPPEN INSTANTLY, IT IS A SKILL THAT DEVELOPS OVER TIME.

AS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS YOU WILL BE PLACED IN LEADERSHIP ROLES. YOU MAY BE LEADING SMALL TEAMS, LEADING SECTIONS, LEADING DEPARTMENTS OR EVEN ORGANISATIONS.

LET ME TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT I HAVE LEARNT THAT GOOD LEADERS EXHIBIT.

1. A LEADER'S WORDS AND ACTIONS ARE THE **SAME**.
(THEY DO NOT SAY ONE THING AND DO ANOTHER)
2. LEADERS **EARN** THEIR CREDIBILITY WITH THEIR STAFF
(IT DOES NOT COME BECAUSE YOU HAVE A DEGREE, IT TAKES TIME, REMEMBER YOUR WHOLE CAREER COULD BE OVER 40 YEARS PLUS)
3. LEADERS **TRAIN** THEIR STAFF, GIVE THEM CLEAR LEVELS OF AUTHORITY AND **TRUST** THEIR STAFF TO MAKE DECISIONS IN A **NO FEAR** ENVIRONMENT
(A NO FEAR ENVIRONMENT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE WHEN THINGS GO WRONG YOU NEED TO KNOW QUICKLY TO HELP IN CREATING THE SOLUTION AND NOT WAIT UNTIL IT GETS WORSE OR IS TOO LATE)
4. LEADERS TREAT THEIR STAFF WITH **RESPECT**
(WHATEVER POSITION THEY HAVE IN THE ORGANISATION)
5. LEADERS **SERVE** THEIR STAFF
(THEY GIVE THEM REGULAR DIRECTION AND SUPPORT, AND PROVIDE THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO CARRY OUT THEIR TASKS)
6. LEADERS **COMMUNICATE** REGULARLY TO EVERYONE
(THEY COMMUNICATE UPWARDS, DOWNWARDS AND SIDEWAYS CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF 'NO SURPRISES')
7. LEADERS TAKE **RESPONSIBILITY** AND LOOK FOR PERSONAL CHALLENGES
(I CALL IT 'OWNERSHIP MENTALITY')

THESE CHARACTERISTICS THEN LEAD US INTO THE PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES THAT YOU NEED IN YOUR CAREERS.

PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

WE ALL HAVE THREE KEY ASSETS AS PROFESSIONALS

1. FIRSTLY OUR TECHNICAL ABILITY

- DON'T STOP LEARNING AFTER YOUR DEGREE IS COMPLETED
- LEARN EVERYDAY
- INVEST IN YOURSELVES
-

2. SECONDLY OUR NETWORK AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE

- TREAT EVERYONE WITH RESPECT
-

3. THIRDLY INTEGRITY

- IT TAKES A LONG TIME TO BUILD A REPUTATION
- IT CAN DISAPPEAR RAPIDLY

THERE IS AN OLD SAYING "REPUTATION ARRIVES ON FOOT, LEAVES ON HORSEBACK"

ALL THREE AREAS REQUIRE FOCUS, INVESTMENT AND ATTENTION

SO I HAVE MENTIONED ABOUT FLEXIBILITY AND PERSERVERANCE IN YOUR CAREERS,
SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

IT REMAINS FOR ME TO NOW WISH YOU ALL THE BEST
IN YOUR CHOSEN PROFESSIONS AND IN YOUR CAREERS,
GO OUT AND REMEMBER YOU ARE LEADERS.

GOOD LUCK.

THANK YOU.

