

September 24, 2021

President's Address
Academic Year 2021 Fall Graduation Ceremony

Yuji Oie, President, Kyushu Institute of Technology

Today it is a great pleasure for our university to host the graduation ceremony, and I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to all of you who are starting a prosperous new journey. I would also like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the parents and their families who have been providing love and support to these graduates until today.

Our various social activities have greatly been affected by the global spread of the Covid-19, and I understand that you have experienced serious difficulties for your academic activities, such as not being able to have sufficient discussions with your supervisor and colleagues in person, and having full attention to the prevention of infection when conducting your research and such experiments in the laboratories. Therefore, I also would like to express my deepest respect to all of you who have overcome various difficulties and challenges, and finally attend the ceremony here today.

Now that you have acquired specialized knowledge and skills in our university, you will have to face various challenges in the real world. In order to tackle and solve complex and complicated problems, it is important how you can first recognize those problems by close examinations and diversified approaches. I would like you to remember that it is necessary for you to have a good team of people with diverse cognitive capabilities in order to see the problems from multiple perspectives which you cannot have all by yourself because extension of one specific discipline cannot always bring good solutions.

Giving one example, there was a national project team of cryptology which consisted of not only mathematicians and other related researchers but also crossword puzzle experts; the team was made based upon the importance of diverse cognitive capabilities. [1]

Thus, I hope you will enjoy exposing yourself to open communities where you can interact with active people from many different and wide range of fields other than yours so I ensure you that you will have opportunities to gain new perspectives.

Although we cannot expect the end of the Covid-19 yet, I believe we can learn many things from this. Let us consider and appreciate the value of health, dignity of human life, the importance of mutual cooperation instead of division, and so forth. No matter how enormous the effect of the virus is, we humans are the ones who make our own choices and take actions with our strong will; and you are the main players in building our future society.

As we are living in the society with uncertainty, complexity and various changes, people feel more anxious, nervous, or dissatisfied, and then the social tensions may build up. However, I would like all of you to remember that it will give you an opportunity to learn how to relax and ease the tension of your team and yourself, and to develop your flexible thinking. Furthermore, when you realize that choices you make sincerely and the things you carry out do not always bring the best solutions and you encounter the limitation of these choices, please also remember that it teaches you how to become humble to make corrections and cultivate your wisdom of adjustment in order to procure new choices [2].

In closing, I wish you great success as you turn this auspicious corner in your lives today and hope the many beneficial connections you have made at Kyutech serve you well in your productive futures to come. Once again, congratulations.

References:

- [1] Matthew Syed, *Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking*. Discover21, 2021. (Japanese edition)
- [2] Sheena Iyengar, *The Art of Choosing*. Bungei Shunju, 2010. (Japanese edition)