# Chancellor, vice-chancellor, faculty members, graduates, guests, it’s a privilege to be asked to give a short address here on this very special occasion. Congratulations to all of you on competing your degrees or doctorates.

Now I know **Oscar Wilde** said that life is too important a thing to talk seriously about – but I’m going to spend a few moments doing just that. In my time, I’ve been fortunate enough to interview many 20th Century leaders in **politics** and business. But **nothing** was as humbling as the TV interview with Nelson Mandela just before he became South African president.

It was not so much what he **said**, but I was **mesmerized** by his hands – hands that - day-after-day - had broken rocks during his 27 prison years on Robben Island in the cruel days of apartheid. And his words then were as we remember him, humane, forgiving - but also tenacious, tolerant and **transforming.**

And it was Nelson Mandela who later said **education** is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world.

Graduates, you now posses that weapon, and I’ve no doubt you’ll put it to good use. But remember **Einstein**: “Intellectual growth should **only** cease at death”. Or as Henry Ford put it more prosaically: “Anyone who stops learning **is old** – whether at 20 or 80; anyone who keeps learning stays young”.

In my local paper this week I read of a man who is alive and well at 106. The chances are most of you graduates will live to be 100 – such are the advances in medicine in **replacing** failing body parts.

That means you may return, time after time, to university, and you will not only **change jobs** frequently, but also the way you work. (I’ve done it more than 20 times, and when I started out the fashion was to seek a job for life: that’s **no longer** an option)

It also means that you will need to keep a much **closer watch** on the world about you. You can’t **submerge** yourself in your subject to the exclusion of all else. Even if you stick to your chosen career path, you’ll find it hard not to be i**mpacted** by rapid change. Your educational experience has been with the arts and humanities – a **wise** choice, full of **opportunity** – but you need to be aware of **what’s** going on in science. Climate change gets media attention, but not much else.

## Take robotics, which has moved from sci–fi novels to the mainstream. We have an Australian remote controlled submersible scouring the ocean floor for the wreckage of Malaysian’s flight 370. Less well known is the ability of programmed robots to care for patients with dementia in Japanese nursing homes, providing companionship, a gentle hug, and a friendly voice. Robots in health care will be a big thing this century.

## Robots will feature in space exploration, where only a couple of weeks ago we discovered the moon of the planet Saturn has a huge sea, an indication there may be life out there.

### The future of war is also changing fast. 100 years ago World War 1 started. 16 million died, many of them in stinking trenches. Today we fear new conflicts, possibly in Ukraine and in the East China Sea. Modern weapons - as we’ve seen in Afghanistan, are different. Drones, operated remotely, and targeted to kill identified individuals. And cyber weapons, disrupting whole systems, like power supply.

China, Russia, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates – as well as the US – are all in the market with commercial drones – for sale to police forces, to security businesses, for fire and flood watch, and for traffic control. These machines can stay aloft for 17 hours.

Even Facebook is investing to bring the internet to people who currently can’t get the web. Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook’s founder, says drones powered by **solar cells** will be the best way of connecting people in some of the world’s most densely populated cities. There may be a lesson for the NBN here.

### These and many other developments will impact every branch of the arts, humanities and the law. And, in case you think I’ve strayed too far from the subjects you’ve studied, consider this:

## You can buy a drone from the Apple store for less than $500. You can attach a video camera to it and send it up 100 metres or so controlled by your iPhone. Imagine the uses to which this can be put in photography, music advertising, public relations. Imagine the issues of privacy, safety and security that will arise as these portable drones become a widely used consumer item.

## As you move on with your careers you will find many people fighting change. After the arrival of the printing press, books were burned, a habit revived by the Nazis in World War II, when Hitler’s leaders regarded educated people as the enemy. One anecdote may be of interest. When I joined the management of the Financial Times in London I said I wanted fax machines and computers for my staff. I was told, “Colin, you don’t need these gadgets, we have messengers”. That was just 25 years ago.

I’ve had many bosses – ranging from Rupert Murdoch to the Washington Post’s Ben Bradlee, who used to run meetings while simultaneously lobbing a **basket ball** into a net . One of the best was Greg Dyke, who was unfairly **sacked** by the BBC for supporting a journalist who reported there were no weapons of mass destruction to justify the invasion of Iraq – now an accepted fact.

He said “Work has got to be fun, and enjoyable, so people want to get up in the morning and come in here. As managers it’s your duty to make it so.” I hope, in life, you will always enjoy what you do, and if you don’t, do something else.

Thank you.