

## President Hirano's Speech

2011 Graduation Ceremony and Graduate School Investiture Ceremony

### *See the essence and fly high in the future*

First of all, I'd like to extend my sincere congratulations to the 3,518 undergraduates and 2,604 graduates upon the receipt of their degrees today. I'd also like to congratulate the 90 recipients of professional degrees. I applaud your work and effort. I also would like to express my admiration for your parents who supported you in achieving these goals.

As you know, Osaka University merged with Osaka University of Foreign Studies in 2007. Today, as the President of Osaka University, I am deeply honored to be able to confer degrees upon those first students admitted to the School of Foreign Studies.

Graduating from this university with a bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degree, society will expect great things from you with the knowledge and experience you have acquired. You must be filled with dreams about what lies ahead. My hope is that you will look beneath the surface, the appearance, and fly high in the world in whatever field you choose.

The Great East Japan Earthquake and the ensuing catastrophe at the nuclear power plants in 2011 made it obvious that we lack for leaders. In an opinion survey conducted by a newspaper<sup>1</sup>, three historical figures were voted as ideal leaders: SAKAMOTO Ryoma, 1st, ODA Nobunaga, 2nd, and TOKUGAWA Ieyasu, 3rd.

As to why they selected SAKAMOTO Ryoma, respondents answered, "He worked for the common good." and "He looked ahead to the future." Additional traits deemed essential for real leaders were: decisiveness, foresight, a sense of justice and responsibility, and the ability to plan, bargain, and work with others.

If you were to ask me, I'd say leaders also need: determination, principles, and the ability to forgive or consider others. Obviously leaders must have determination to achieve something, otherwise, nobody would follow them. Leaders must be determined to achieve their goals. For example, "Construct world-class cars in our company," "Bring about a revolution in information communication," "Develop highly efficient photoelectric cells," or "Develop an epoch-making cancer medicine."

A leader needs principles. The higher the goals, the more attractive the leader becomes to his/her followers. However, can all persons with lofty aspiration become leaders? The answer is No. The motivation behind your goals is important. Why and for what do you have this ambition — that is important! One leader wants to develop cancer

drugs in order to become a millionaire; another wants the same in order to help people suffering from disease. The leader with selfish ambition, impure motives, cannot strike a chord with people and attract them. Then, can a person with only ambition and pure motive become a leader?

In addition to the above two traits, consideration for others, a trait akin to “forgiveness” is important. The single Chinese character for this word translates as “forgiveness” or “consideration.” This single character is made from two Chinese characters: the character for “similar” and the one for “heart.” In other words, the character connotes considering the other person’s situation and feelings, forgiving him/her — having a mighty heart. Being big-hearted is very important for a leader.

In addition to these three traits, persons in responsible positions need to acquire the ability to see beneath the surface, beneath the appearance, and ascertain the true essence of the matter. In order to respond to matters in front of us appropriately, we need to have the ability to know the true cause, the reason why the problem has arisen.

For example, suppose the sale of an electric appliance is bad. If you give a big discount, sales may increase temporarily. However, if you miss the true essence and don’t solve the fundamental problem, the big discount will be only a stopgap measure. Look more deeply: Is the performance poor? The performance is good, how about the design? Or, does no one need the product in the first place? If we can’t find a true reason, it’s not a real solution. If we fail to catch the whole picture because of some other priority, we won’t be able to see the true nature of things and may lead our followers in the wrong direction.

A common saying speaks of not being able to see the wood for the trees. If we only pay attention to the trees right in front of us, we will likely fail to see the wood, the forest. So in all things, we must not get caught up in what is right before our eyes, but view all things from a comprehensive viewpoint.

You have had experiences in classes, laboratories, clubs, and social activities at Osaka University. I’m sure you have sharpened your ability to see the true nature of things. Whenever you are involved in any events or addressing challenges, I want you to ask yourself what the true essence of the things is. I want you to tackle root causes of problems by clarifying the nature of each problem. Furthermore, whatever field you go into, I want you to become a leader in that field and contribute to Japan’s future as well as the human development and the improvement of society’s welfare. I would like you to believe that you have the ability to be active in the world as leaders and move with grace. Let me explain why I believe so.

For any organization and human, the present condition of the organization or human

comes from their roots. Their experiences are handed over as a kind of DNA. All of you share a common history, a DNA, that you learned at Osaka University. Being graduates of Osaka University, you will be viewed as persons selected from society and you will have responsibilities to give back to society accordingly. So, what is this Osaka University that you have learned? Let's think about the Osaka University that will become an important part of your life in the future.

It has been said that, "Universities are the center of learning and scholarship" and "Pursuing academism is the only mission imposed on us." With the lofty aspiration of making Osaka University a leading university in the world and nurturing outstanding personnel with a high sense of ethics and global mindedness, Osaka University will continue to make every effort to shine forth even into the 22nd century by coalescing the wisdom of all members of the Osaka University community.

Last year was the 80th anniversary of Osaka University's founding. 81 years ago in 1931, thanks to the enthusiastic support of the citizens of Osaka and persons involved in the university, including then president of Osaka Prefectural Medical University KUSUMOTO Chozaburo and then governor of Osaka Prefecture SHIBATA Zenzaburo, Osaka Imperial University was founded with two schools, Medicine and Science. It was the 6th imperial university and the first president was NAGAOKA Hantaro. What I want to emphasize here is that it was an imperial university founded with money donated by the citizens of Osaka Prefecture.

Our university's roots reach back to Tekijuku, in 1838, a private "place of learning" founded by the doctor and scholar of Western sciences, OGATA Koan, who worked to save people with Edo period state-of-the-art knowledge. Tekijuku's open academic culture and forward-looking spirit gave birth to Osaka Prefecture Medical School and, eventually, to today's Schools of Medicine and Science at Osaka University. In 1933, Osaka Industrial University merged Osaka University, becoming the current School of Engineering.

When the schools of Law, Economics, and Humanities were established following the end of World War II, collections of books regarding traditional Chinese and Japanese learning possessed by Kaitokudo were passed on to Osaka University. Kaitokudo was a "place of learning" for merchants, founded by merchants in Osaka in the late Edo Period. These book collections were symbolic of the original scholarship and the "Osaka spirit" that our university inherited with these tomes. With the introduction of the new education system, the schools of Law, Economics, and Humanities were divided into the School of Letters and the School of Law and Economics, setting up a structure for our current comprehensive university.

As can be seen, thanks to the support of the citizens of Osaka, the spirit and roots of Osaka University reach back to Kaitokudo and Tekijuku, and Osaka University continues to grow under the motto “Live Locally, Grow Globally.” Moreover, after going through transitions such as the legal status change to that of a national university corporation in 2004 and the merger with Osaka University of Foreign Studies in 2007, Osaka University now represents our country as a genuine comprehensive university. Osaka University has produced many excellent scholars, educators, intellectuals, as well as key government and business leaders.

Let me explain about Tekijuku, one of the roots of Osaka University. At the beginning of his novel *Kashin*, SHIBA Ryotaro, a graduate of Osaka School of Foreign Languages, the predecessor of Osaka University of Foreign Studies, wrote that Teijuku was the predecessor of Osaka University and OGATA Koan a founder of Osaka University.

*Tekijuku, a private place for the study long ago of Western medicine in Kita Semba, Osaka, is considered the predecessor of Osaka University. Someone says that an excellent founder is needed for a private school as a religion sector needs a guru. In that sense, Osaka University was born under a bizarre fate that it has a founder that only private schools can have, although it was founded by the government. OGATA Koan, a doctor who learned Western medicine aka “a teacher in Kasho-machi” in Osaka, is the founder of the school.*

More than 1000 students came to Tekijuku from all over Japan (except for Aomori Prefecture) and studied day and night. The students included FUKUZAWA Yukichi who served as a school chief and founded Keio University in later days, NAGAYO Sensai who served a school chief following FUKUZAWA and built the foundation of Japanese medical care system and public health system, HASHIMOTO Sanai who had a foresight of necessity of opening the country but died at the age of 25 in the Ansei Purge, SANO Tsunetami who found Hakuaiha, the predecessor of the Japan Red Cross, OMURA Masujiro who created a modern military system for the Meiji government, OTORI Keisuke who faced off against Western powers in diplomacy, and IKEDA Kensai who served as the first dean of the Faculty of Medicine at The University of Tokyo. Thus, Tekijuku produced persons who were active as leaders in various fields. Tekijuku played a major role in the modernization of Japan in the early Meiji Period.

FUKUZAWA is well-known by his famous remark “Heaven doesn’t make a man better than others, nor does it make a man worse than others.” I like his other remark “Do not enjoy only what suits your own taste, but enjoy being true to yourself. Perseverance wins in the end.” Being honest to your own feelings makes this real world pleasant. Even if things don't go as one wants, a person who lives faithfully is the one who

achieves his goals. I like the idea that a person who lives faithfully is the one who achieves his goals. Such an academic atmosphere lies at the foundation of Osaka University.

OGATA Koan, the founder of Tekijuku, compiled *Fushi Ikai no Ryaku* consisting of 12 chapters. Fushi refers to C. W. Hufeland (1764-1836), a German doctor. OGATA translated Hufeland's *Enchiridion Medicum or the Practice of Medicine* that had been translated into Dutch. He organized part of the book into commandments, using them as cautionary lessons for doctors.

The first commandment says, "The essence of the medical profession is to live life not for oneself but for others. Not leading an idle life and pursuing fame and gain, put off being a private person and try to save others. Focus on saving others, treating diseases, and alleviating others' suffering." In other words, doctors should live not for themselves but for others. Don't try to cut corners to gain in stature. We should become persons who assist people's lives and understand others' suffering.

The second commandment says, "See patients as patients. Don't see people in rank and class. Think of what you can get by comparing the difference between the money of the rich and the tears of the poor." Needless to say, his remark is neither more nor less than seeing beneath appearances and ascertaining the true essence of all things. These remarks were directed toward doctors, but are applicable to everyone.

In Osaka University, the free and unstructured academic atmosphere of Tekijuku, the spirit for people, society, nation, and ethical responsibilities, the passion for scholarship of Osaka merchants, and the eagerness to build an imperial university in Osaka have been handed down over generations. I want you to carry with pride their graduation from Osaka University and make it basis for your future.

Now Japan is facing the greatest challenge since WWII. A year has passed since the nightmare of disasters; however, many disaster-stricken areas still have no prospect of recovery. Whether Japan can overcome this crisis and find its way to a bright future depends on you young people. Society asks you to fulfill your responsibilities as leaders in a variety of fields in society, or further promotion of inquiring minds obtained from basic and applied research as part of intellectual creative activities nurtured at Osaka University. You who have studied and conducted research at Osaka University can achieve this goal.

You will lead your lives as working people active in the front lines of companies, as educators nurturing next-generation personnel in administration agencies, or as researchers exploring the future, and, above all, as human beings. I hope you will not lose the excitement of today. Cherish every moment and fly high in the world with your

head held high. Osaka University will always support you. Please come back to see us on Homecoming Day. I believe you have infinite possibilities for your future. See beneath appearances, ascertain the true essence of all things, and fly high in the world!

Allow me to close by wishing you all good fortune. May each of you live your life to the fullest!

Congratulations on your graduation!

March 22, 2012  
Osaka University  
President  
HIRANO Toshio

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<sup>1</sup> Sankei Shimbun Newspaper, morning edition, January 1, 2012