

**Speech by YBhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Razman Hashim**

**Pro-Chancellor, Sunway University,**

**Sunway University Business School Graduation Ceremony, 9 October 2015**

Good morning and welcome! It is an honour to be here today to address Sunway University Business School's graduating Class of 2015 and all those who have made this day possible for you.

Graduates,

You are entering a world vastly different from the one that I entered in 1967 as a banker. Back then, we used to communicate through faxes and letters. Today, you have the internet and smart phones. Back then, we shopped in department stores. Today, most of you shop online. Back then, if we wanted to know if a product is worth buying, we asked our friends or listened to the TV and radio for expert reviews. Today, most of you look for consumer reviews.

The pervasiveness of technology in our lives has changed exponentially changed the way business is conducted. While we used to talk about connecting, competition and change; you all now talk about hyper-connectivity, hyper-competition, and hyper-change where unpredictability, and uncertainty is the new norm.

Likewise, traditional structures in organisations have been broken down more quickly than any other time in history. The idea of leadership has been transformed. From hierarchy, we now practice shared responsibility, from command and control to mentoring and managing with emotional intelligence.

Fortunately, I have great faith that you will be able to navigate these capricious times, as you have been prepared by the Sunway University Business School not just to be part of the change but to lead it. As you journey on to take up your leadership role in the fast-evolving business world, there are two of things I would like for you to remember.

First, find your passion. As with everything else, your next path of choice will come with its fair share of ups and downs. Passion is necessary to overcome these highs and lows and eventually drive you, sustainably, towards your goals. That's true in business, the arts, for hobbies, or even raising a family. Everyone's favourite CEO, Steve Jobs,

once said, "The only way to do great work is to love what you do." And this is true – you don't get to your goals without passion.

To illustrate how important passion is to business success, I would like to share a story with you. In 1993, Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah, Founder and Chairman of Sunway Group, built his first education institution, Sunway College, with a passionate belief that education will be his legacy for the community. He started out with just 200 students in a small building in Petaling Jaya. Even in its fledgling days, he spoke about one day making quality education accessible to all. Five years later, he started the Sunway Education Trust Fund, which disbursed scholarships to the deserving. The rest, is living history. The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, is now the largest social enterprise for education in the nation, and to-date it has disbursed a total of RM210 million in scholarships. Today, 23,000 young people are pursuing the futures they have always dreamed about, all because of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation.

Secondly, your values matter. Admiration from your peers or your ability to persevere and have continuous success will not come from some title on the organisation chart, but it will come from earning trust because of the values you hold. Another great management guru, Stephen Covey, says, "The ability to subordinate an impulse to value is the essence of the proactive person. Reactive people are driven by feelings, by circumstances, by conditions, by their environment. Proactive people are driven by values – carefully thought about, selected and internalised values."

During the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, when I was still with Standard Chartered, the Sunway Group, like many other companies came to tough times. Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah was one of the many business owners, whom I met regarding loans. But unlike many, he did not ask for a price cut. Till this day, I remember what he said to me: "I intend to be in the business for a long time, and I want to be able say that no bank has lost a ringgit doing business with the Sunway Group." His statement remains true even until today, and now the Sunway Group is more than 40 years old and worth more than six billion ringgit in the market. His values, Integrity, Humility, and Excellence are now embedded into the Sunway Group and continues to drive the Group's success. These values should be embedded in your character, as they can help you navigate through life and uncertain times.

Class of 2015,

As you pursue your own paths, I hope that in the years to come, we can continue to

build upon the relationship we have fostered throughout your time here and through the Sunway Alumni community. The Sunway Alumni should be a platform to celebrate our future successes together and I hope a platform for you to return to share your stories so that our next generation of students can benefit from your experiences as well.

Before I close, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you our recent partnership with Harvard University Asia Centre to bring in the Asia Leadership Institute or ALI to the Sunway campus. With ALI, we have and will continue to bring in graduates from the world's best education institutions such as Harvard, Stanford, MIT and other Ivy-League universities to Sunway, to share with our students cutting-edge knowledge and best world practices. For 2016 alone, ALI has lined up more than 20 programmes on leadership and strategy catering to different levels of students, youths and young professionals. Do take the opportunity to return to your alma mater and continue your learning journey with us.

Once again, I join everyone here in offering my most sincere congratulations to the Sunway University Business School Class of 2015. Give yourselves a huge round of applause. I wish you the best and I hope you will lead us all into a brighter future with passion and values. Thank you.