



**Convocation Ceremony 2023**

**Open University of Mauritius**

**Speech of the Chief Executive of the Financial Services Commission**

**28 APRIL 2023**

Dr Oomandra N. NATH VARMA, OSK, Chairperson, Open University of Mauritius;

Dr Kaviraj Sharma SUKON, PFHEA, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius;

Dr Ushad SUBADAR AGATHEE, Director, Academic Affairs Division, Open University of Mauritius;

Mrs Subhashini L.D. GOPEE, Registrar, Open University of Mauritius;

Board members of the Open University of Mauritius;

Academic and Non-Academic Staff;

Representatives from the Public and Private Sectors;

Graduates and Parents;

Members of the Press;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

All protocols observed;

I wish you all a very good morning.

I am delighted to be here today at the Convocation Ceremony of the Open University of Mauritius. I thank the Open University for giving me the opportunity to be in the midst of you and address you this morning.

Let me at the very outset congratulate you on your big achievement.

Today marks a significant milestone in your lives, and I am honoured to share this moment with you and celebrate your accomplishment.

Graduating from a university is a remarkable accomplishment, and you should all be proud of yourselves for reaching this milestone. Today, your hardwork, dedication and commitment over the years to furthering your education are being recognized and your effort has paid off. You make your parents, family and lecturers very proud. You also make us all very proud.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you embark on the next phase of your lives, I would like to share some thoughts and advices with you which I believe will help you in your journey.

Most sectors of our economy, including the financial sector to which I belong, relies heavily on skilled and knowledgeable professionals to drive innovation and growth.

Your qualification is a gateway to step in the field of employment. However, it is important for you to keep in mind that qualification is just a stepping stone in the world of employment. It is just a passport that gets you through the door but this is not enough for you to be comfortably seated.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world,” as Nelson Mandela said. In fact, education is a life-long learning process. There is a famous saying, which I quote “education starts in the womb and ends in the tomb” end of quote, states the value of education. As such, I encourage you to continue learning and growing throughout your life.

For those who are already in employment, this additional qualification is the key that unlocks the door to a world of opportunities for you to further progress in your career. I commend your commitment for furthering your education.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Whatever the degree or course you have completed, the key is that you develop yourself into someone who has learnt to learn because today’s professional career is characterised by life-long learning. This is the reason why on-the-job training is provided and professionals have to acquire continued professional development to be relevant in the market.

Therefore, my advice to you would be that at the initial stage, try to be multi-skilled, to be curious to learn about other aspects and wherever the job is, it is for you to be able to seize the opportunities.

As you are aware, the world is changing at a rapid pace and we are in the midst of a digital revolution which is transforming the way we conduct business. New technologies such as Fintech, blockchain, and artificial intelligence are reshaping the business landscape. As graduates of the Open University of Mauritius, I believe you have been well-equipped, to

a certain extent, to embrace such changes and to adapt to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

However, in order to succeed in the business world, you need to combine your academic and technical expertise with soft skills. Whether you call it key competencies, life skills, transferable skills, future work skills or employability skills, soft skills are personal attributes that enable you to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.

You have 4 of your friends who go together for an interview. Same qualifications and same background. Whom is to be selected? Today the job market is dynamic, competitive and challenging. Nowadays, employers place a high value on soft skills. Possessing soft skills that are expected at the workplace are critical to get selected and hired by employers.

In the workplace, soft skills complement hard skills and enable employees navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well and accomplish goals.

Key soft skills include:

- Attitude
- Communication (both listening and speaking skills)
- Work ethic
- Teamwork
- Leadership qualities
- Time management

Therefore, in order to boost your employability, you need to have soft skills and continuously work towards enhancing such skills.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My next message to you is that success does not happen overnight, hard work is important to achieving success. It requires determination and discipline. You have to be fully alert on a daily basis, work hard and be consistent day in and day out if you want to attain your goals. To have reached the academic milestone which we are celebrating here today, you must have demonstrated these qualities throughout your academic journey. I, therefore, encourage you to continue applying them in your professional lives.

Another key message for you is to nurture resilience and to view setbacks as opportunities for growth. In life, be it professional or personal, we are bound to face setbacks and failures. You should not dwell on setbacks and failures but rather acknowledge the situation, learn from mistakes and then move forward. These experiences help us grow and become stronger and better.

As I told you earlier, career is a lifelong journey and you need to learn to learn, that is your degree will help you get into the domain and the doors are open for different skills and these skills are now adding the edge. Remember, no one can lead a successful career solely for money. If you are ready to stand out, you need to be passionate about what you do. Transform yourself into such a talent that your skills and competencies will drive your perks and not the other way round. I am sure you can do it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you embark on your journey beyond this ceremony, I encourage you to strive for excellence in all that you do.

Once again, I would like to congratulate each and every one of you on your remarkable achievements. I wish you all the very best and success in your endeavours.

Dhanesswurnath Thakoor

*28 April 2023*