

Good morning everyone,

It's an honor to be standing before you today, not only as a graduate of this great institution but also as someone who has had the privilege to work alongside many remarkable teams. And it's these teams, these diverse groups of individuals, that have played a significant role in my success and growth over the years.

As you prepare to step out into the world, I want to leave you with one key piece of advice: be an effective team player. Yes, it's important to be talented, innovative, and driven—but your ability to work well with others will define your success more than anything else.

First, remember that teamwork is not about always being right or always leading. It's about collaboration. It's about understanding that everyone has a unique perspective to bring, and your role as a team member is not just to contribute your skills, but to create an environment where everyone feels valued. The most successful teams are those where every member's ideas, strengths, and weaknesses are acknowledged, respected, and leveraged.

To be an effective team player, listen—really listen. Active listening means engaging with what others are saying, not just waiting for your turn to speak. This fosters trust and understanding, two pillars that make any team strong. Listening also means being open to feedback, accepting it with grace, and using it to improve. We are all works in progress, and the best teams are those where people aren't afraid to admit mistakes and learn from them.

Next, be reliable. It's easy to get caught up in your own individual goals, but remember that your actions, your commitment, and your accountability impact the success of the entire team. Be someone who others can depend on—whether it's meeting deadlines, following through on promises, or simply offering support when needed. When you're reliable, you build trust, and trust is the foundation of any effective team.

Finally, embrace diversity. Not just in terms of backgrounds and experiences, but in thought and approach. Great teams are often made up of people who think differently, who challenge each other in ways that drive innovation and improvement. Embrace the discomfort that sometimes comes with different opinions, because that's often where the magic happens. A team that isn't afraid of disagreement is a team that grows stronger and more creative.

In the end, the best leaders are those who empower their teams. And the best team players are those who, while they may lead at times, know how to follow, how to support, and how to put the success of the team above their own.

So, as you leave here today and start your professional journey, remember that your success is intertwined with the success of those around you. Be a team player, and you'll go further, faster, and with greater fulfillment than you ever could on your own.

Congratulations, and I wish you all the best in your next chapter!

Thank you.