

FINAL DRAFT

Marietta Commencement 5.1.21

Mike Salvino

Thank you for that kind introduction and thank you to the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and alumni, for inviting me to be a part of this special day. It is an honor.

(PAUSE)

Congratulations class of 2021 on graduating from Marietta College. It is a huge achievement, you should be proud, and I hope you take time to celebrate.

(TRANSITION TO SUGGESTIONS)

Today I am going to spend roughly 10 minutes and focus on you and your future by sharing some suggestions that I believe will help you personally and professionally.

Now before I get started, I want to highlight that there are 3 participatory parts in my speech, where I will be asking you to do something...So with that intro let's get started.

(CAREER STAGES)

Let's start with your career.

Whatever you become a teacher, engineer, accountant or whatever career you choose, I want you to keep in mind that most careers are bucketed into the following stages:

- **The first five years out of school** all that matters is that you work hard. Employers want to see that you really want to learn and work. So don't ever show up late because showing up late is disrespectful. It tells everyone else that they can wait for you and that you are more important than them. Also, don't be the first one to leave at night. If your work is done, work ahead and then always make yourself available to your colleagues to work whether it be early in the morning, late at night, or yes, even on the weekends. The key is to never have your future employer look for you or question your work ethic. I think a Marietta College Education has prepared you well for this stage.

- **During the next five years**, so now 6-10 years out of school, you need to become a subject matter expert. What do I mean by this? You have to be known for something. Think of your professors who taught you here, they are experts in their subject of English, accounting, engineering, etc... If you're a consultant, you have to become an industry expert. The key is that you want to obtain the experience and wisdom so that others will seek you out for your advice.

- **At the 10 year mark and for the rest of your career**, how quickly you rise and how far you go will be based on one thing and one thing only and that is **judgment**. Judgment is a function of making good decisions and earning the trust of others, which leads to the question of how do you build trust?

(TRANSITIONING FROM JUDGMENT INTO BUILDING TRUST)

What I have found is that there are 3 key things you all need to do to build trust with others and therefore have others trust your judgment.

1. First DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE GOING TO DO...This could be as simple as texting someone when you said you would, or as complex as completing an important project...Either way make sure you don't just talk about doing things but actually do them...

To make my point, let me give you a riddle that I would like you to answer. This is the first participation part of the speech.

There are three frogs sitting on a log and one decides to jump. So the question is how many frogs are now on the log?

So this is a multiple choice question and I am going to give you 3 answers...Graduates what I would like you do is raise your hand when you think I have given the right answer...

- How many of you think that there are now **zero frogs** on the log because the first frog actually jumped and startled the other 2 frogs, so they jumped too, and now there are no frogs on the log? Raise your hand if you think this is the right answer.
- How many think there are now **two frogs** on the log because this is not a hard riddle and it is just basic Math...3-1 is 2? So raise your hand if you think this is the right answer...
- And finally, how many think there are still **3 frogs** on the log because that frog only decided to jump, but deciding or saying you are going to do something does not actually mean you did it? Raise your hand if you think this is the right answer...

Yes, you all guessed it. The correct answer is 3...So what is the moral of the riddle? Don't be the frog...If you say you are going to do something, do it and this will help you earn trust...

2. Second BE DIRECT BUT DON'T BE DISRESPECTFUL...I think it is really important that your voices are heard, but timing is everything when using your voice. Trust me the job you are taking the people that currently work there are not waiting for you to show up and give them all this great wisdom you learned at Marietta...BUT...If someone asks you a question, then answer it with your real thoughts not what you think the person wants to hear.

Also, always apply the 24 hour rule...You ask what is that? Don't ever react on something in the moment...Give it 24 hours and then act...Things good or bad always look different in the morning after a good night's sleep...So if you're upset about something don't start sending emails, or tweeting, or posting, or whatever and telling the world how you feel because trust me you will regret that in the morning...Give it 24 hours and if you are still upset, then that is the time to thoughtfully use your voice...The key is to use your voice respectfully and at the right time and again this will help you earn trust...

3. Third is the Golden Rule - TREAT OTHERS THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED...In your early career you will work for others...Observe how they treat people...Ask yourself: If I was in charge would I treat

others this way” Leading others is hard, but if you constantly treat others the way you want to be treated then again you will build trust... and people will always want to work with you!

So as you start your life after Marietta remember to work hard, become a subject matter expert in something, and along the way keep developing your judgment and earning the trust of others.

(CLOSING)

So in closing, I mentioned at the beginning of my speech that I hope you take time to celebrate your success today. My view is you cannot come to a celebration without a gift so I brought with me these white bags and inside these white bags is my gift to you...You will receive these white bags after you receive your diplomas and after you walk behind the stage and take your picture. Now what is in the bag is a brand new computer...Come on I work for a technology company so what did you think I was going to give you...Technology is key to your future so what better way to start your future, then with a brand new computer replacing the old one that you probably beat up over the last 4 years? This is the 2nd participatory part of my speech so don't leave this celebration without a white bag!

The other thing in life you will realize is nothing is ever free and this is where the 3rd and final participatory part comes in...What I want you to do and please don't blow this off...As you watch your classmates walk across this stage and receive their diplomas, think about all the people that have helped you get to this moment in your life...It could be a professor, a classmate, advisor, parent...My ask is that you create a mental list of these folks and before the end of today THANK THEM!! Never miss the opportunity to say thank you and today you have a great opportunity to do this!

Final point, in the bag you will also find this card...On the front of the card is a note from me and on the back of the card you will see all the suggestions that I just gave you...My hope is that you will keep this card and come back to it from time to time because I really believe these suggestions will help you personally and professionally.

I wish you nothing but the best of luck in life, if you ever need anything you can call me, and congratulations again on this great achievement!!!

###