

Graduation speech

I am honored and humbled to address you on behalf of the graduating students. My name is Shunta Furukawa, and I am graduating with a master degree from the graduate school of System Design and Management. As the student speaker today, I consider it my first duty to thank; on behalf of all of the graduating students, every person who made our graduation possible. On account of all of us, thank you.

Special thanks to the Keio president and Dean Maeno for encouraging and motivating us. Also, to all our distinguished guests, administrators, professors, families and friends. Thank you for sharing this unforgettable moment with us and taking time from your busy schedule to be here at this graduation ceremony. We greatly appreciate your involvement.

The time I spent and the experience I gained at this Graduate School of System Design and Management (SDM) are absolutely irreplaceable. SDM is a place where students from different nationalities, age and backgrounds come and learn from each other. In other words, SDM has unprecedented diversity. This precious environment, made our perspectives wider and developed our out-of-the-box capabilities.

What stands out the most in my memory when going through my SDM experiences is the time I spent in Design Project. Companies provided us current issues they had and we SDM students, tackled them as a team. We spent much time puzzling over to find a solution that sometimes we would end up arguing. However, when we finished the project and reached the goal of providing a solution, we felt fulfilled and pleased; we had endured hardship and came out stronger.

SDM teaches us the importance of connecting with other people. Ultimately, humans, as members of society, are the ones that have problems and obtain value from solutions. However, the perspective we have is originated from one's view point, it is difficult to take into account other's feelings and thoughts. To provide a value to society, we should carefully consider the people who use the solution and empathize with them. In this sense, we learned the importance of observing, interacting and intertwining the insights of people into a solution.

Connecting producers and users is not the only important thing, how we connect with them is also significantly important. We experienced that effectively cooperating with each other as a team leads to the creation of great ideas, this is known as Co-Creation. In SDM, there are people who already have working experience and expertise on certain domain. Forming a team with expertise from different backgrounds and tackling issues brought us a much better result than if we were to work alone. This type of experience is invaluable as it mimics the real world and provides us with the confidence to properly cooperate with other people once we start working.

We are now ready to take our next step. Some will work in private companies, some will work in national organizations, and some others will become PhD students.

There are several paths we can take, but one thing we should remember is that it is time to put our experience and knowledge into use. We need to promise that we will not forget what we learned; that we will not settle with our current knowledge and experience; that we will continue to learn and improve. We need to keep our minds open and keep a global perspective, we need to connect with people all around the world; we are after all, part of a single world.

Once again, thank you, the faculty who put so much effort in us to make this happen, the School Office members and all the people who supported us in achieving our goal.

As a closing remark, on behalf of the graduate school of SDM we hope that Keio University continues to prosper and wish good health and success to all Keio faculty and members. Thank you very much.

16th September 2015

Shunta Furukawa