

October 1, 2019

President's Address for the Master's and Doctoral
Programs Entrance Ceremony, October 2019

Yuji Oie, President, Kyushu Institute of Technology

Congratulations on your entrance to our university.

On the occasion of today's entrance ceremony, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to all of you on this auspicious day, and also express my great respect for all of the efforts you made to arrive at this point. It is the ultimate pleasure for us to welcome you to the Kyushu Institute of Technology. On behalf of all the faculty members, I would like to deliver this celebratory address.

Out of the 62 students who are being admitted to our university today, 55 students, approximately 89%, are international students from 19 countries and regions. We are absolutely delighted to have so many students from such a large number of countries and regions.

First, let me tell you a bit about our university's history.

Our university, Kyutech, where you now begin your studies, was originally founded in 1909 as a private institution called the Meiji College of Technology. The founder, Mr. Keiichiro Yasukawa, was a prominent figure in the business community of Kitakyushu and the Chikuho region, and he established various businesses, such as YASKAWA Electric Corporation, that served as the foundation of our nation's industrial growth.

In the Meiji Period, Japan lagged far behind the great nations of the world industrially and economically, so it was vital to develop human resources to support the country. Based on his belief that "profits earned thanks to the country should be used for the country," Mr. Yasukawa donated a large part of his private fortune to found the Meiji College of Technology, with the aim of training engineers who could support the industrial advancement of Japan. This year marks 110 years since the school's founding.

During these 110 years, the world and Japan have both changed greatly. The wide variety of ideas and technologies have enabled numerous innovations. The professionals who will make future innovation possible will need specialized knowledge and skills and logical thought and analytical skills. At the same time, attention has been called to another perspective. In his book titled *How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and*

Inspires Innovation, the CEO of design consulting firm IDEO, Tim Brown, writes that viewing innovation from a strictly technological perspective is not as sustainable as it once was. He writes that we need the “ability to be intuitive, to recognize patterns, to construct ideas that have emotional meaning as well as functionality.” He also says that it is important to learn from others and that ideas work their way through organizations, undergoing change, recombination, and evolution until, often, they succeed; and he points to the saying that “all of us are smarter than any of us.” What is important is to take an interest in new ways of thinking.

Our university is currently engaged in collaborations between industry and academia, as well as international collaborations, in an effort to strengthen the appeal of education and research on our campus. We hope that such interactions between a wide range of people, including those from industry and overseas universities and international students from diverse countries and regions, will result in many beneficial reciprocal effects.

The true benefit of studying at university is giving yourself the greatest chance to enjoy your life while pursuing activities even after your studies are complete. I hope you will always have multiple options at the ready and be capable of choosing from among them so that you never find yourself in the situation of having only one choice. I also hope that you will occasionally create new choices for yourself. Toward that end, use this campus to acquire much knowledge and many skills and to test out that knowledge and those skills. Use it also to acquire the ability to keep on learning and to make friends who can help you and whom you can help, too. Our campus provides the environment and opportunity for you to make that happen. Please take full advantage of it.

In closing, as you begin your studies, I hope you will be mindful of your health, remain intellectually curious, take advantage of the many learning opportunities and environments available here, pursue a meaningful life as a graduate student, and be confident that your decision to attend Kyutech was the right one. Once again, welcome and congratulations.