

Business Hall of Fame speech  
By Dr Roderick Deane  
Auckland 29 July 2009

Prime Minister  
Distinguished Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen

We come to the end of an evening full of memories for those who are fortunate enough, and maybe ancient enough, to be chosen to be in the Business Hall of Fame.

But at the same time we think of the representatives of the Young Enterprise Trust who are at the beginning of their careers and dreaming the dreams we all had when we were their age .... and the dreams that some of us still have ! In between are the years of challenge and excitement, frustration and pleasure.

If I have any advice from my rather diverse career, it would be that you should never be afraid to try something new. As a wise person once pointed out, Noah was an amateur. And remember, the Titanic was built by professionals.

On this journey you need

- the willingness to develop your talents to the full,
- the ability to get along with your colleagues,
- to be not afraid to attempt things that you think may be outside your present comfort zone,
- the absolute dedication to the tasks you have chosen, and
- an enthusiasm to work towards leaving a legacy to make the world a better place than when you joined it.

As a great admirer of the splendid work of the Young Enterprise Trust over many years, it is especially touching and a great honour to be recognized by the Trust this evening. Can I thank the trustees very much indeed and can I reflect for just a moment on the way in which the Trust's huge emphasis on the importance of developing each others talents has been the theme of my own extraordinarily fortunate and highly varied working life.

Success comes in part from one's own efforts but it can come even more so from the contributions others unselfishly make to developing one's talents and providing one with amazing opportunities. I have been head of the country's public service and lead several of its largest companies. I have been President of the country's largest charitable voluntary organization and held a Chair in Economics at one of our universities. But I never applied for any of those jobs. Others decided to ask me to lend them a hand and created my opportunities for me.

My parents, Reg and Margaret, laid the groundwork with a family environment of great love, care and much discipline. The discipline was such as to encourage me to volunteer for army camp each school holidays. I was astonished to discover that I seemed to be the only cadet who thought the army discipline was comparatively lax.

Success at army camp lead J S Webster, Headmaster of New Plymouth Boys High School, where I went to complete high school, to rescue me academically at school by volunteering me individual tuition for several nights each week for the year I spent at New Plymouth. This gave me the base for my academic career.

I think of my friend Sir Frank Holmes who taught me to love the study of economics and the joys of teaching others economics. And Sir Ronald Trotter, one of my finest mentors, and incidentally the only Chairman I have ever seen fall asleep while chairing a board meeting, who persuaded me to try things I had never before envisaged I could accomplish. He is truly a great New Zealander.

I owe much to the leaders of the Reserve Bank, the Governors Sir Alan Low and Ray White, and the Bank's most outstanding economist, Philip Coney (the cricketer Jeremy Coney's Father), who encouraged remarkable openness of vigorous debate amongst their younger staff even in the most constrained Muldoon type environment and who advised the Government of the day on what they felt were the best economic policies even when instructed by the Minister not to do so.

I learnt from Sir Roger Douglas that major economic reform was indeed politically possible and that fine political leadership could truly and substantially improve economic performance. I loved working with David Lange, who said to me in the depths of the 1984 crisis that his country was more important to him than winning the next election.

At the State Services Commission, Don Hunn epitomized for me the very best of the qualities of the New Zealand public service; and Margaret Bazley re-emphasized for me (and some of her political masters) about how strength of leadership is based not just on good analysis, but also on strength of conviction, and the determination to implement the best of policies.

Roger Kerr has reminded me over and over how the courage to advocate the right economic and social policies through thick and thin ultimately has its own rewards despite often being assailed by others preoccupied with their own power games.

I have had no finer boss than Peter Shirtcliffe, who always wanted everything thing to happen by yesterday, and who taught me more than he will ever realize, including about how to chair complicated boards in demanding times.

In my various board roles I have been privileged to work with Sir Dryden Spring, whose great strength of character has been unfailingly alongside me in some stressful times; James Strong, one of Australia's most outstanding company Chairmen, whose relationship with Michael Luscombe, the CEO of one of Australasia's finest companies, Woolworths, has been an example of how quality personal relationships can underpin strong corporate performance; Paul Baines, a director of many companies, whose integrity, intelligence, and insistence on high standards served so many of us so rewardingly; Rob McLeod and his wife Joanne, whose bicultural leadership is an example to us all; Ralph Waters, one of the finest CEO's I have worked with; and Jonathan Ling, whose strength and calmness under the pressures of the past couple of years have reminded us of how to manage through tough times.

I must also acknowledge the many talented young people with whom I have had the privilege of working. Within Telecom I recall the creative and innovative technical and marketing teams with whom I loved working and who taught me so much; within the ANZ National Bank, the young people like Susan Peterson and Michael Rowlands who helped Sir John Anderson and me put together the largest corporate merger in New Zealand; and of course the amazing management team at Fletcher Building which has rebuilt one of New Zealand's truly icon companies, now in its 100<sup>th</sup> year.

Some of my friends from New Zealand's largest voluntary welfare charitable organization, the IHC, are here tonight, including JB Munro and Ralph Jones. I pay them a special tribute as they represent a part of my life, the caring for people with disabilities, that has been more rewarding for me than any of the top level government or corporate roles I have had the good fortune to occupy.

In the fields of the arts and culture, my life has been much blessed by stunningly talented people who have shared their music and their art and their talents with me, enriching my life beyond belief and providing me with great therapy in times of stress. I pay tribute to Seddon Bennington who died on the mountains two weeks ago. I appointed him to the role of CEO of Te Papa. As the final magnificent haka for his funeral resounded throughout the museum I thought of the pleasures of working with such a multi talented and I might say complex man. There was not a dry eye at Te Papa that day.

Gillian and I have an extraordinary group of friends with whom we share many common interests and who are wonderfully supportive to us in our lives, reminding us always that people matter most.

My daughter Kristen taught me to value every minute of every day and what really matters most in life.

And of course my wife Gillian, my wisest and ever present counselor, has underpinned all my activities, teaching me about opera and art, history and people, in a way which has been stunningly fulfilling and wonderfully supportive.

So Ladies and Gentlemen, life is not simply about the roles one fulfils but rather it is about the people one works with and works for. In this respect there could be no more fortunate person on the planet than me. I pay the highest tribute to all those with whom I have worked and to my wonderful set of friends, many of whom are here tonight.

Thank you.