



CHANCELLOR'S GRADUATION SPEECH - 2022

- **Our Chief Guest**
- **Chairperson and Members of the Foundation Body**
- **Chairperson and Members of Board of Trustees**
- **Chairperson and Members of University Council**
- **Members of University Management and Staff**
- **Members of University Senate**
- **The Vice-Chancellors of Sister institutions present**
- **The Guild President and his cabinet**
- **Distinguished Guests**
- **Graduating class of 2022 and Students present**
- **All other Protocols Observed**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of Nkumba University, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to this 24th Nkumba University Graduation Ceremony. Allow me to especially welcome our celebrants of the day – the graduands. You are the reason that we have convened here this morning. And to the graduand's guardians, families and friends present today, we thank you for walking this journey all the way to the finish line.

Over the years, I have attended a fair share of graduations, but this is my second as Chancellor of such a great institution – an honor that I neither take for granted nor take lightly. Of course, you are the reason I am here. For without graduands, I would not have people onto whom I would confer Degrees and Diplomas.

Allow me to ask this question to you all – what does graduation mean to you?

Today marks a particularly important accomplishment in the lives of our graduands. It is a beacon of triumph, representing the culmination of your relentless hard work, sacrifice and dedication over the last few years. It is one that is shared by parents, siblings and friends who contributed to your success. I am sure some of you shall hold parties to celebrate – and you should. Be it a Certificate, Diploma, Degree or even a Ph.D., all of you here today should be proud of yourselves. Be happy, be grateful – because not many have been able to attain such success amidst all the obstacles encountered.

Today is a day for celebration, but as the sun sets in the evening and rises tomorrow morning; this question shall start to lurk at the back of your minds. So, now – what next? For those who planned well, the answer shall come easy. But for the others, the harsh reality will kick in – you have joined a pool of millions of graduates in the country, and millions across the globe. Many

attained similar grades as yours while others probably have twice the number of degrees you have got and yet they walk the streets.

Luckily, today's theme, "Academic Excellence for Practical Competences in the 4th Industrial Revolution" was coined to guide you through this current age – the digital age. We should appreciate that the world today; the post-COVID19 world, is unlike anything we have experienced before. All sectors were affected in one way or the other way; so, what does this mean for the job market that we are sending you into? It means that you have got to adapt or you will perish.

Like the great physicist Albert Einstein once said, "**The measure of intelligence is the ability to change.**" So, based on that definition, I pose the question - how intelligent are you? Those with first class degrees may feel pretty good about themselves but this goes beyond the classroom. Your adaptability will define the heights to which you will reach as a scholar, businessperson, professional, husband, wife, parent etc.

One good initiative we have launched since I assumed the responsibility of Chancellor is the Chancellor Innovation Initiative (CII). Nkumba University through the Chancellor Innovation Initiative (CII) that was launched on the 24th February 2022 aims at nurturing novelty and creative thinking within all fields taught at the university. We want to provide a platform - more facilities and mentorship to our students and alumni to experiment on ideas that will solve real-world problems. CII is the first of its kind in Uganda where the industry is being brought into academia to drive translation of ideas into innovations. Under CII, Nkumba University is collaborating with Innovations Village, Stanbic Business Incubator and other partners to support innovation development across all disciplines within the university. CII's objective is to make sure there are more young people participating in the innovation eco-system and deriving more patents in Uganda. The lecturers will have the responsibility of making sure that students think innovatively during the last 10 minutes of every lecture. This is intended to nurture the innovative thinking amongst students and lecturers. The CII will operate the Nkumba University Innovations Fund. This Innovations Fund will in the long run support the process of transformation of the innovations into commercialized products and services. Am sure that CII will lead to more startups and job employment for the young people in this country. During the next graduation, we shall exhibit some of the products developed as a result of this initiative. Hopefully, these products / services / models shall open up avenues through which our students can benefit professionally. I hope we can discover the next Steve Jobs here at Nkumba University.

To those looking to join the professional world, every year, new graduates enter the workforce, and so it's increasingly getting harder to acquire jobs. Employers today look beyond what you studied on paper. Often times you shall be asked why you should be hired during job interviews. They want to know what competencies you possess beyond what was taught in class. These are questions to ask yourselves;

1. Are you creative?
2. Do you possess problem-solving and complex thinking abilities?
3. Are you aware of your environment?
4. Do you possess good communication skills?
5. Do you take responsibility of your actions and tasks assigned?
6. Are you a team player?
7. Do you have the required skills to do the job?

Fortunately for you, Nkumba University provides high quality education that cultivates competence, confidence, creativity and high moral character. With this background, we believe that you shall be successful in your future career. I am sure and hopeful that you, graduands here today, will make us proud in the coming years.

Lifelong learning, as you will soon learn, is a part and parcel of the modern world. This comes back to adaptability – if you wish to stand out and excel in your career, you must practice capacity building at all times. Of course, studying will become challenging for some of you after getting extra responsibilities i.e., marriage and parenthood. However, it must never be an excuse for you to sit back and go with the flow. Get out of your comfort zone, learn new skills, unlearn them and relearn.

I thank all the parents, guardians and benefactors that have supported these students to make sure they complete their studies. Sparing your resources, you had to make sure that your child had an education to this level. This is no mean achievement. Thank you.

I would also like to thank the entire University Council, Management and all Nkumba University staff for grooming these students in what they are now. It is our responsibility to nurture students into products that can better represent us out in the world. Therefore, let us always give our best in whatever we do so that the students are able to find their purpose hence shaping their new world. Without you, these graduands would not probably be here today.

Graduands, as you go out there, please be good ambassadors of the university. You ride on the reputation cultivated by those before you over the past 27 years. Don't let them down by being incompetent, corrupt, or criminal. Uphold the moral values that were instilled into you wherever you go. Don't settle for less but for the best as Martha Graham once said, "The only sin is mediocrity." Live by these words and you shall know true success.

I wish you the best for your lives and remind you that from now onwards you will be referred to as Nkumba University Alumni. You should also feel proud to be associated with Nkumba University. This is your mother institution. So, work hard and come back and support this University.

Thank you for listening to me and may God bless you all.

I Owe You!