

## For Future Generation

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Universities are places where we develop people who will live in the future.

I was born in Tokyo, in November 1961 and am 58 years old now. When I was elected as president of the Chiba Institute of Technology eight years ago, I was the 11th youngest president serving at one of the 783 universities in Japan. I did not feel all that young, though. In fact, I am the same age as the former US president Barack Obama. President Obama completed his eight years in office four years ago,

and is now enjoying a leisurely retirement. In addition to President Obama, I am also the same age as the sprinter Carl Lewis, the gymnast Nadia Comăneci, and the late Princess Diana.

I actually had a shocking experience recently. When I told my students that I am the same age as President Obama, Carl Lewis, Nadia Comăneci, and Princess Diana, they had only heard of me and President Obama. This made me realize that there is already a generational gap in our university, and that if we provide education that only reflects our common sense and values, students will lose interest. We must always strive to provide an education that works to bridge this gap and retains the interest of students. To that end, what we must do is to have universities impart upon teachers an awareness of how to train the human resources that can be active in the future, while considering the future of students and putting a priority on education.

In the future the wealth of a country and its people will not be determined by the strength of the country or its companies. Rather, the wealth of a country and its people will be determined by the abilities of its people.

For this reason—and now more than ever—education that increases the abilities of people is necessary. Modern society, in which ICT and AI have advanced by leaps and bounds, is completely different than the society of the past, in which people made decisions based on the premise that some things are absolutely right or absolutely wrong. The sayings, methods and so on of individuals who lived in the era when no one used a computer are useful as fragmentary knowledge, but they will never provide the essential truth needed to solve modern society's challenges.

In the age of constant change to come, diversity will become incredibly important. In an age like this, developing convenient persons who are only suited to conditions right now is meaningless. And no amount of that sort of education

will produce results that meaningfully contribute to society. This is because people who can only cope with current conditions will likely become obsolete just as quickly in the age to come. We cannot use university education as a means to train the human resources necessary today or to cover labor shortages. This would definitely be negative for the future of the world.

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