“You may have not learned how to learn,” said Steve Daley, President of Market-Based Management, to students about lifelong learning at a recent Focused Fridays Leadership Forum at the Huntsman School of Business.

He explained further that although someone might be a good test taker, they may not be a great learner. He said ultimately in the real world it doesn’t matter what your GPA was in college. Daley stated, “Your grades really matter and they really don’t matter at all. No one has asked me what my GPA was. What they will ask is if this person is capable, is this person committed, can this person make people they work with better?”

He spoke of the importance of having a ‘can do’ attitude and embracing change, “It’s easy for us to change and destroy what others have built, but it is very hard to destroy or change the things that we have built. We must embrace change. We become too attached to our own brilliance.”

Daley emphasized that each and every unique skill and trait is valuable and should be considered so in however you apply yourself. “If you’re just punching a time card you will be out competed every day.”

He closed by sharing how his studies in economics were not seen by others in his life as a secure career path, much like his decision to move back to the United States from Australia. He expressed that you need to commit to your choices and stay true to who you are.

“Stop worrying about what others think and worry about yourself, develop your own skills.”

Daley, born and raised in Australia, received his bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University and moved back to Australia for a career opportunity. He then decided to move back to the United States to go back to school and get a Ph.D. in Economics from George Mason University, which led to a career with Koch Industries.

The Focused Fridays initiative provides career development programming, including workshops, industry panels, skill-specific bootcamps, and the signature leadership forum, which brings senior executives to discuss leadership.

Videos of past leadership forums can be found at: huntsman.usu.edu/focusedfridays.