UOC Corporate 2017 Seminar Skilled professionals for smart organizations
IBM Client Center, Madrid

Good morning.

To a great extent, the 20th century marked the end of a world of watertight compartments. Until then, everything tended toward a perfect separation: from the stages of growth to interests and even life itself.

There was a formative stage, a productive stage... There were people who did research and people who produced... Today, that is no longer so. And so aware of this are we that expressions such as "**liquid modernity**", coined by the **sociologist Zygmunt Bauman**, have become commonplace.

This blurring of borders has been heightened by the emergence of new technologies. We see it, for example, in the generation of knowledge. The university has lost its exclusiveness and, without relinquishing its role of fostering innovation, it has had to add a role of active node, connector and facilitator of exchanges between new knowledge generators: companies, hospitals, museums and all sorts of centres.

"Unshared knowledge dies. Only through connectivity does innovation multiply its effects."

This blurring of borders is also seen in education. Today, it is no longer confined to the first years of life; education now accompanies us throughout our professional career.

Educational models such as the UOC's were created precisely to satisfy this growing demand for acquiring new knowledge and refreshing old knowledge. Without belittling the importance of "knowing", we should not ignore the need to "know how". In this respect, programmes such as the industrial doctorates show the benefits of business-university partnerships in which both "knowing" and "knowing how" are combined.

In addition, online learning in general, and our educational model in particular, have been shown to be especially effective for acquiring the skills that employers are looking for, such as the ability to solve problems, to work in digital environments, to engage with society, to organize information and to deal with time constraints.

Projects such as UOC Corporate further highlight this fundamental founding attribute, aspiring to become a laboratory for innovation in e-learning adapted to companies' needs.

We are moving ever closer to what we call Industry 4.0. In other words, highly digitized companies that view the new cognitive capabilities offered by artificial intelligence, robotics and the Internet of Things as unique opportunities for improving their businesses' performance and operating efficiency.

> *"This new industrial revolution will inevitably change business models, leadership styles and labour and organizational relations."*

Of course, these changes raise many ethical, legal and labour issues that are a source of concern for companies' human resources professionals and teams.

With this seminar, the UOC wishes to contribute its knowledge to help understand and benefit from this tsunami. Because it is clear that while the first need is to understand the effects that this progress will have, our next step must be to acquire the keys for integrating this technology and being able to leverage the opportunities offered by the new businesses of the future, without having a harmful impact on careers.

With the different speakers we have here today, we want to show how education and leadership, talent and innovation are the best options for addressing the future and guaranteeing business and professional success.

All the rest, as we well know, is uncertain. We work in competitive environments and markets subject to constant change, where we must make ourselves heard and respected through the quality of our work. Hence the importance of optimizing the yield from each professional's talent, fostering innovation, investing in training, and instilling quality leadership. At the end of the day, running a company, like conducting an orchestra, is very much a collaborative venture... We will see whether **Silvia Sanz,**

director of the Metropolitan Orchestra of Madrid and the Talía Choir, shares this vision and, like Riccardo Muti, thinks that the manager's role should be to guide rather than command.

«Personally, I think that personal and professional maturity consists precisely of being able to guide all the collective intelligence available toward a common goal. Helping you in this challenge is our mission.»

Thank you very much.

Josep A. Planell