



Toby McCartney

Co-founder and CEO, MacRebur, and winner of Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Media Business VOOM 2016 finale.



“THE CANCER OF TIME IS COMPLACENCY. LIFE HANGS ON A FINE THREAD, SO IF YOU WANT SOMETHING, DO IT NOW. TOMORROW IT MAY BE TOO LATE.”

Pete Goss



→ Presenting MacRebur before being named winner of the Start-Up category.

An inspiration: Sir Richard Branson

I once asked Sir Richard Branson “How do I best manage my staff?”

His reply has stuck with me: “Train your staff up so that they could leave you and get the very best jobs, but treat them so that they will never leave you.”

As an employer, I believe in meeting my staff’s values, rather than having them sign up to my corporate values. I find this helps keep everyone in my team happy and motivated.

What in your view is the greatest challenge facing leaders in the next 25 years?

We call it the ‘plastic epidemic’, and believe the effects of waste plastics in our environment are a huge challenge for our future. Globally, we produce over 350 million tonnes of plastic, and this figure is expected to double in the next 20 years. Over 10 million tonnes of waste plastic ends up in our oceans each year destroying corals, killing fish and other sea life. Unless we do something now, our oceans will be lifeless.

What in your own life has taught you the most about leadership?

I was told by my schoolteachers that my future wasn’t looking good, and that I would always fail at everything I do. Before having my own businesses and being inspired by others in business, I lived my life believing that my teachers were right.

My entrepreneur’s mindset has proven to me that there is no failure, only feedback. I take the feedback from things that don’t work out, and rather than fail, I now find new ways to succeed at the things I really want in life.

We only have the right to inspire others and should never put people down like my teachers did to me.