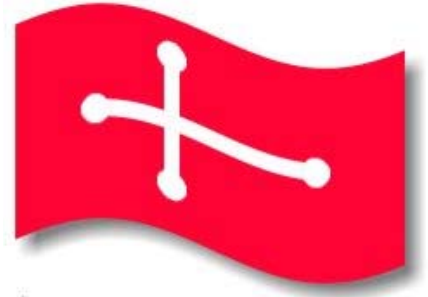


# FOCUS ON FOUNDERS



*The Journey to Better*

## Examples of metaphors used in engaging boys

### 1. Are we better than a seal colony?

#### Theme for the Quarter

The theme for this quarter:

*Are we better than a seal colony?*

may seem a little strange, but allow me to explain. I was fortunate to spend some time at Plettenburg Bay in the holidays and did the walk around Robberg. On the Knysna side, I encountered a colony of juvenile seals in a rock pool, 'protected' by a large rocky outcrop. There were literally hundreds of little ones and older ones frolicking in the rock pool and a number "just chillin" on the rock in the sun.

I watched them for a while and was struck by some of the similarities I noticed in the organisational and social behaviour of the seals with the same in the boarding houses at Michaelhouse. To continue the metaphor, some large waves crashed over the rocky outcrop and knocked some off their perch and into the pool. There was a ledge that some of the 'bigger boys' were securely perched on. I then watched 3 younger pups climb up towards the ledge (almost like watching 3 E Blockers approach the bench outside Founders) clearly looking for some affirmation from the bigger boys. They were merely barked at! Kept in their place yet they stayed just below the perch of the bigger boys.

What was then interesting was that the 3 younger pups started jostling each other until one was pushed off. He rolled over, dropped quite heavily onto a rock and fell into the pool. The extended metaphor was painfully evident to me.

I was then struck by the question, "Are we better than a seal colony?"

I shared this with the boys last night and challenged them to consider where we are better. Even though nature also has a hierarchy, do we manage or implement it better? Do we show enough empathy, sympathy, care and compassion that makes us different from nature's 'survival of the fittest'. Is there someone to check on the young pup when he is pushed off the ladder by his peers or if a 'big wave' knocks him off the rock? Are the big guys on the best outcrop behaving in a manner worthy of being looked up to by the younger pups? These are the questions I asked them to consider in *Are we better than a seal colony?*

I concluded with “Are you helping to push someone up, or are you rather forcing someone down”.

## 2. The journey to better

Youtube link : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDLfWaCkMkQ>

Quotes from advert – The Journey to better

*Better* isn't about clinging to the past

*Better* is not about pretending to be the future

*Better* is questioning

*Better* is challenging (nice ambiguity here!)

If you think you are good enough at . . . . . , you're probably right!

If you are crazy enough to question “good enough”, you may just get BETTER.



### 3. Start again

youtube link : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YtYgjRit10>

Former All Blacks captain Richie McCaw showed what it takes to commit to top level performance in this Beats by Dre promotion.

The veteran New Zealand skipper is portrayed as going through a "daily routine" that sees him dragging his battered body out of bed, running through picturesque New Zealand scenery, being badgered by the dastardly media and engaging in scrum practice. His humility is also very evident.

- Have to ask questions
- What are those questions?
- One of the first – mental strength in 2015 and 2016?
- WHAT DO YOU THINK?
- Experience isn't the best teacher, evaluated experience is.

The Haka words:

*We are the children of . . . .*

*We hold the knowledge of our ancestors*

*We stand proud. We stand strong.*

*We seek the path to success (significance??)*

*We carry our legacy for future generations.*

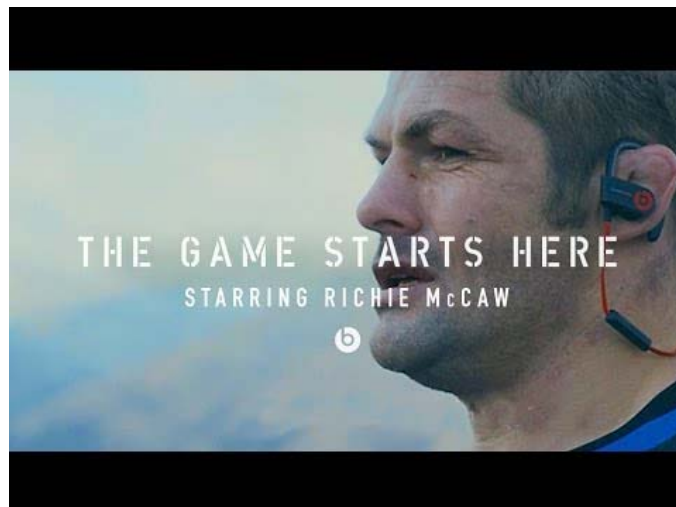
*We are the land. The land is us. Here we belong.*

*With humility and pride, we will be relentless on the path to success.*

*Overcoming the pressure and fear of battles to come to reach our  
pinnacle.*

*With strength of mind, body and soul, we will rise to the challenge*

ALWAYS



#### 4. On your marks

As you will see on the letterhead, I have started the year with the tag-line



Ask any sprinter, and they will tell you that starting strong is where the race is won. It's not dissimilar from our annual rhythm – both as individuals and as a House. A half-hearted or misdirected start may cause us to be out of kilter the whole year through. We are looking at two starting blocks. 1. Looking at knowing who our God is, knowing who we are in God, and knowing our God-given mission. And 2, to reaffirm what Founders represents and who we are as Founders.

In House Business, I have been dealing with 1, working through Isaiah 40, the core verses being:

*28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

The boys themselves under Shingi's guidance will look what it means to be part of Founders in the context of the above. I have included extracts from Shingi's excellent speech to us at the Founders House Formal Dinner last Thursday as an indication of their thoughts on this towards the end of the newsletter.

#### **From the Head of House : Shingi**

Good evening staff, Mr Bownes and men of Founders .I trust that everybody is having a pleasant evening I would just like to say to you all that it is a great pleasure to be able to address you all tonight. In life it is extremely rare to be afforded the chance to call more than one place your home. As they say what makes a house a home is the people in it , I have been blessed enough to be able to honestly call Founders house home because of the amazing people that have influenced and touched my life .

Something that is also very special about my adopted home is its wonderful personality and reputation. A reputation built on the very same foundations used to build the fine reputation that Michaelhouse enjoys. Over the years Founders has become synonymous with strong inter block relationships, a welcoming environment and a breeding ground for strong leaders and characters around the school.

Founders is not necessarily renowned for winning all inter-house events as a matter of fact we are probably better known for our excitement in not coming last and celebrating this mighty feat by proceeding to insist on a house braai .

“Take your mark get set”

As you are all aware this is the concept that we as a house have adopted for the year 2015. Mr Bownes has already began on one of the two places to brace and launch ourselves from, namely being God. I would like to introduce the second and speak a little bit about it. The second is quite simply Founders house, with particular reference to the values which Founders as a house stands for and encourage.

As I mentioned before, Founders house does not promote perfection, but Founders house most certainly promotes the perfect effort. This means giving of your best in all that you do and the constant desire to improve yourself in all spheres of life. The pursuit of reaching ones potential. Founders strongly encourages an attitude of humility whereby no person or task seems beneath you. Whereby one acknowledges that all his achievements are a result not only of his hard work but of intense sacrifice also made by those around him. Founders strongly encourages an outlook of camaraderie, respect, honesty and overall integrity. I strongly believe that armed with these values 2015 and the years to follow will be years filled with fulfilment, success significance and happiness. I urge you all to make these values your armour in your battle with life’s challenges. A common misperception that I have come to disagree with is that your only family are those who share the same surname as you or are bonded to you by blood. Yet arguably myself and the many people I have come to call my family couldn’t be more different. I mean very different. The endless characters that fill the beds of Founders house never cease to make you laugh and at times even leave you pondering possible insanity.

. . . (some in-house humour deleted) . . .

Last and certainly not least are my brothers, I will not divulge too much into how grateful I am to have spent these last four years with you all but I am very grateful and blessed . As a group it can be said that we may have struggled from dynamic problems in our early days but I can truly say we battled through our differences even without weapons. I have learnt that conventional thinking is not always the answer .That questioning the status quo is acceptable. I have been left to wonder rivers could actually flow uphill. Left to figure out who karma actually is. And have to acknowledge the fact that Patrick Lambie might actually just be a saint. Basically I have learnt that normality need not be the norm. Thank you for the lessons you have taught me and for the amazing memories we have made.

As they say there is no place like home and that is particularly true when I look back at all I have experienced here. If I can leave you any words of advice whatsoever I would tell you all this. Time is limited make it count, opportunities are few and far between make the most of every.

Memories here are there to be made so savour every moment because before you know it you will be walking down warriors walk into the world as enriched young men of Founders ready to leave your mark wherever your path leads you.

## 5. In over my head – a merge of music and metaphor

### Bethel Music Lyrics

#### "In Over My Head"

I have come to this place in my life  
I'm full but I've not satisfied  
This longing to have more of You  
And I can feel it my heart is convinced  
I'm thirsty my soul can't be quenched  
You already know this but still  
Come and do whatever You want to

I'm standing knee deep but I'm out where I've never been  
And I feel You coming and I hear Your voice on the wind

Would you come and tear down the boxes that I have tried to put You in  
Let love come teach me who You are again  
Would you take me back to the place where my heart was only about You  
And all I wanted was just to be with You  
Come and do whatever You want to

And further and further my heart moves away from the shore  
Whatever it looks like, whatever may come I am Yours  
And further and further my heart moves away from the shore  
Whatever it looks like, whatever may come I am Yours

6.

Then You crash over me and I've lost control but I'm free  
I'm going under, I'm in over my head  
Then you crash over me, and that's where You want me to be  
I'm going under, I'm in over my head  
Whether I sink, whether I swim  
It makes no difference when I'm beautifully in over my head  
Whether I sink, whether I swim  
It makes no difference when I'm beautifully in over my head  
I'm Beautifully in over my head  
I'm Beautifully in over my head