

WELCOME TO THE GREAT TRAITS OF CHAMPIONS

Within these pages, we will take you on *The Champion's Journey*. Being a champion doesn't necessarily mean being number one. But it does mean that you don't settle for mediocrity. You create an environment around you where excellence can thrive, where great outcomes can happen. You stand up for what you believe in, and commit to making a positive impact with your life.

We come from the world of sport. **Debbie Muir** is one of the Olympic movement's most winning coaches. She led her athletes to win seven out of a possible nine World Championship gold medals, as well as two Olympic gold and two Olympic silver medals in the sport of synchronized swimming. **Mark Tewksbury** is an Olympic champion, a three-time Olympic medalist, and seven-time world record holder in the sport of swimming. Combined, we have over 70 years of experience in becoming, producing, and being champions.

In sport it is easy to relate to the idea of champions. It is part of the culture. But in fact, champions are found in all industries and domains. Business leaders are champions of commerce. Nobel Peace Prize winners are champions of humanity. Parents are champions of their kids. The point is that in some way, we are *all* champions in our lives. The important question is, do *you* see yourself that way? This book will show you how.

This Book Is a Guide to Being a Champion in Life

In sport ideas like winning, coming out victorious, and being our best were ingrained into our psyche. Just as the world of sport demanded the best from us, so are many people being asked to constantly be better, to thrive within the competitive reality of a global marketplace, and to apply themselves more effectively in both their personal and professional lives. Unfortunately, most of us have never been taught the skills needed to meet these challenges in order to consistently perform as champions. Sometimes we hit the mark, other times not, but even when we do, it is hard to repeat because we are not exactly sure how we got the results that we did in the first place. This book will change that.

What lie ahead are three distinct sections to be explored one at a time, each one building on the champion theme from a different perspective. The first part of the book looks at The Achiever Traits, identifying the fundamentals needed to be a champion in your own right. In this section, you determine your win. The second part outlines The Leader Traits, focusing on creating high-performing teams and champion organizations. Here, the outcome is winning results. The final section looks at The Legacy Traits, focusing on championing ways of being that leave a meaningful and positive impact on the world around you. It is about creating the lasting win.

In working with people from around the world, we have discovered that the fundamentals of achievement, leadership, and legacy don't ever really change—they are timeless and universal. Within this book, we have identified the core ideas necessary to build upon to reach your potential: to think, act, and be a champion. Where these ideas get personalized is in their application, depending on your specific desires for your personal and professional life. This is where you need to participate, to bring these traits to life.

At the end of the day, as wonderful as ideas are, if you can't apply them and watch them grow, then what is the point? That being said, we appreciate how busy your life already is. The last thing you need is to have another chore to do. That is why the ideas within each trait are concise and easy to integrate into what you are already doing. There are many anecdotes throughout this book to show you how we have applied these ideas; if you have time, enjoy them. But pay special attention to the shaded, colored and bolded areas of the book. These encapsulate the essential ideas. Once the traits are stripped down to the core, it is the ability to *apply* the basic fundamental ideas step-by-step, action-by-action, over a sustained period of time that adds up to rewarding results for yourself and others. If these ideas are not applied, they simply sit as words on paper.

In terms of process, there is no right or wrong way to read this book. We recommend that you treat it as if it were three books—one for each group of traits (Achievers, Leaders, and Legacy). Take your time so that the learning sticks. Each section has eight traits, with visual support and graphic icons to give you an anchor to the ideas. Following each section, a simple self-assessment tool will help you in identifying which of the traits you are already displaying, and which ones need more attention. If you are looking for some guidance on where to tackle the traits, start here with the self-assessment tool.

You will find as you begin to know this book more intimately that different traits will come to the forefront as you tackle new challenges. In fact, whenever you find yourself facing a new obstacle, we suggest you refer back to **The Great Traits of Champions**. Use it to discover which specific trait you need to focus on, and by improving, will lead you forward. As you become more familiar with the traits, you will see that the right trait will start to find you as you need it.

As we noted earlier, in sport it is fairly easy to relate to becoming a champion—to determine your win—but in other areas of life, it is not so obvious. As a parent, a businessperson, a teacher, a communications expert, a volunteer, a member of a board, a coworker, or a community activist, whatever you might be doing - we might not look at our lives in these terms. But every day, within each of these worlds is the chance to be a champion. It just depends on how we look at things. Being a champion doesn't necessarily mean being number one. It is about excellence, personal betterment, and making a positive impact with your life—whatever you determine the win to be. **The Great Traits of Champions** will help you see the world from a new perspective. Let *The Champion's Journey* begin.