

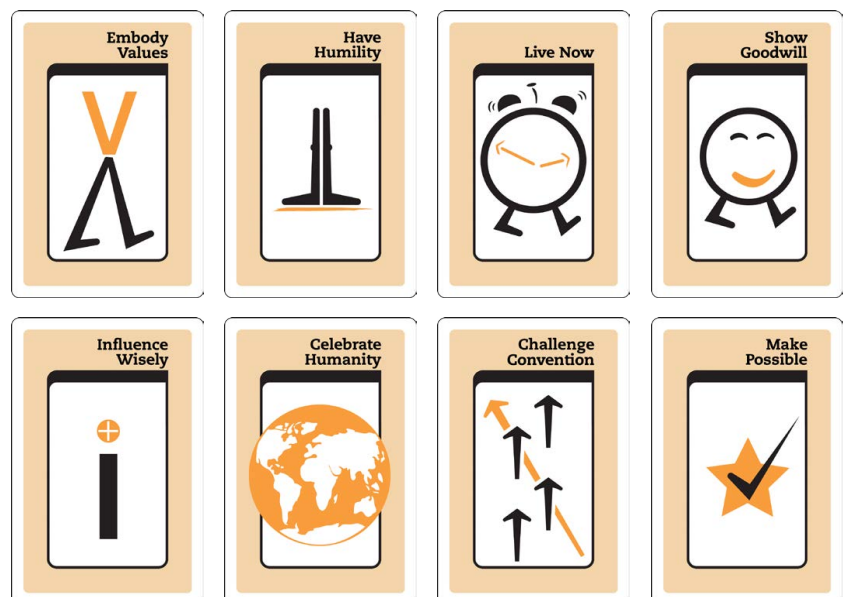
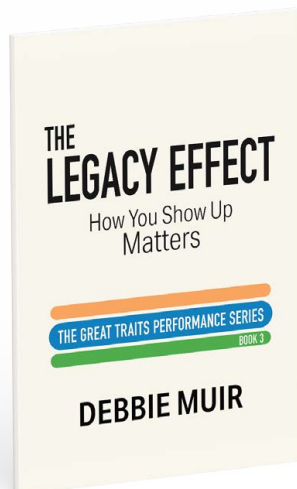
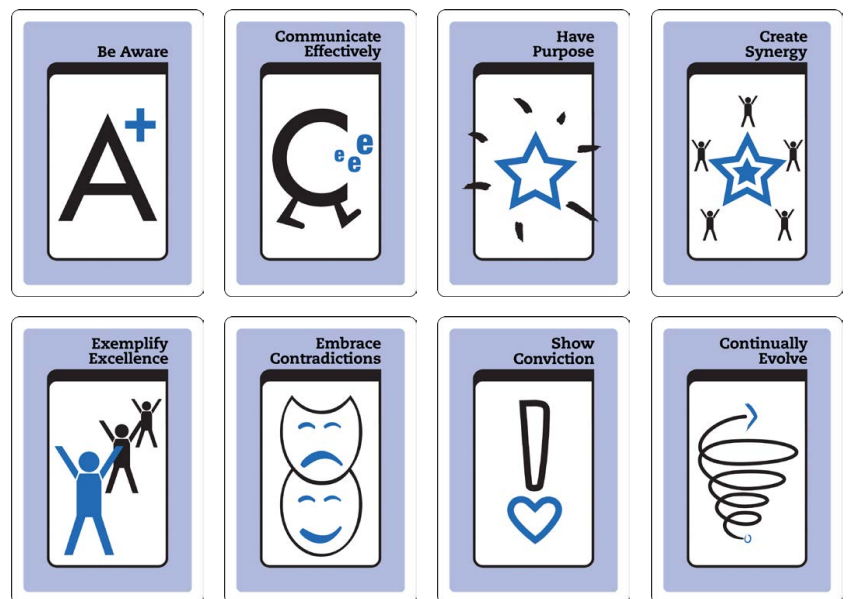
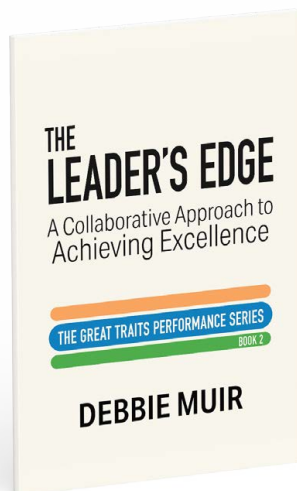
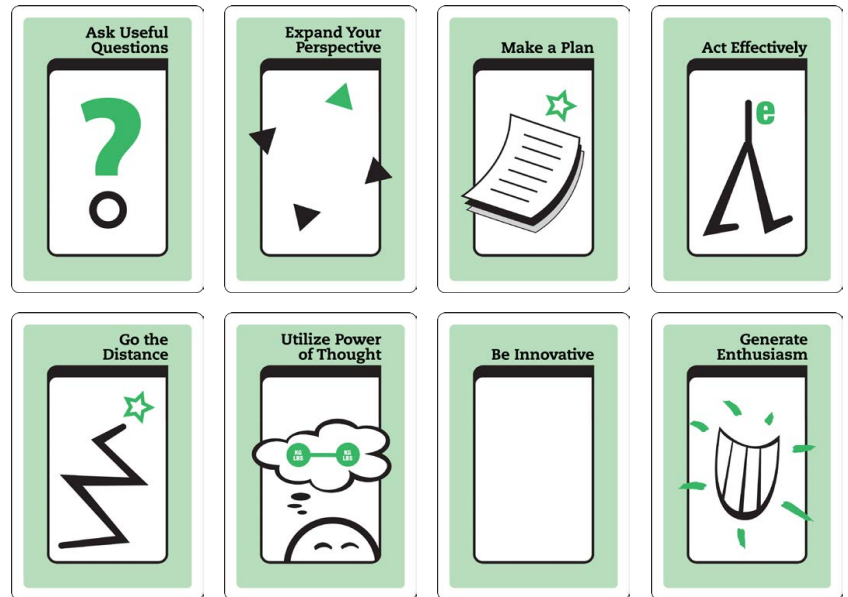
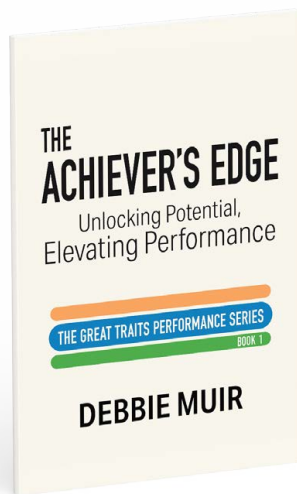
THE LEADER'S EDGE

A Collaborative Approach to
Achieving Excellence

THE GREAT TRAITS PERFORMANCE SERIES

BOOK 2

DEBBIE MUIR



FOREWORD

Randy Upright

CEO, Manpower Alberta

It's a true privilege to write this foreword for *The Leader's Edge: A Collaborative Approach to Achieving Excellence* — a leadership book that stands apart as a practical, hands-on guide for the real world of work. At a time when organizations are grappling with complexity, rapid change, and evolving employee expectations, this book offers a grounded, human-centered road map for leadership growth. Leadership is so often defined, yet rarely understood. Debbie captures the “essence” of what leadership is and how great leaders unleash the potential of their team(s).

What sets this book apart is its clear commitment to action. Rather than prescribing what a “good leader” should be, it empowers readers to discover their own leadership identity, one trait, one skill, and one action at a time. Through the eight essential traits — each supported by core, practical skills — it provides a structure that is as reflective as it is results-driven. Whether you're new to leadership or refining your craft after years of experience, the tools in this book will meet you where you are and challenge your growth.

What makes *The Leader's Edge* a standout contribution to the Great Traits Performance Series is its focus on leadership as a discipline grounded in lifelong learning and self-awareness. This book doesn't just inform — it equips. With its Skill Builders, reflective exercises, and downloadable workbook, it becomes a lasting resource leaders can revisit as they grow and face new challenges.

BE AWARE

KEY CONCEPT

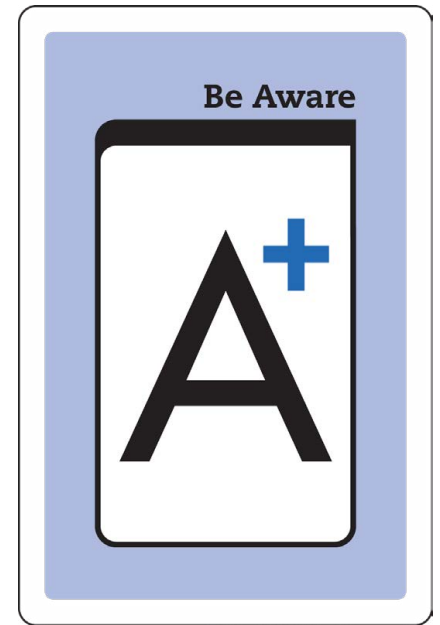
The greater your awareness, the greater your capacity to act effectively as a leader.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- ⚙️ Pay attention to your thoughts and behaviours.
- ⚙️ Observe others' behaviours and thought processes.
- ⚙️ Understand what is happening around you.

As you begin the leader traits, remember that being aware always starts with you. The first step is to check-in with yourself to ensure your own thinking and resulting actions align with where you want them to be.

That said, true self-awareness is one of the hardest things to achieve. We often assume we're self-aware, but many times we're not as in tune with our thoughts, behaviours, or their impact as we believe.



Observe Others' Behaviours and Thought Processes



Leaders have significant influence on the people they guide by helping them develop self-awareness. In many ways, this reflects what's often called emotional intelligence (EQ). This skill focuses on building your ability to observe and understand others' thinking processes.

Just as you've worked to identify whether your own thoughts are empowering or limiting, you can guide others to do the same. By helping them recognize how their thinking patterns influence their actions and outcomes, you empower them to shift their thinking and improve their results.

IN PRACTICE

Why Can't You?

I started working with Mark Tewksbury, a Canadian swimmer specializing in the 100-metre backstroke, as he prepared for the Barcelona Olympics. He asked me to help him with his starts, turns, and underwater kick which were areas where my experience in synchronized swimming could make a difference. As we trained, I noticed something that had nothing to do with technique — his mindset!

Compared to my athletes, who were World Champions, his language and attitude lacked confidence and possibility.

One day, I decided to challenge his thinking. I asked, “Why can’t you beat Jeff Rouse?”, the current world record holder in his event, expecting him to realize there was nothing standing in his way. Instead, within seconds, he listed a long string of barriers preventing him from winning. That moment was a wake-up call. I knew then I had to help him see how his thinking was holding him back. We did an exercise — writing down all his limiting thoughts, crossing out what he couldn’t control, and making a plan for the rest. As he focused on what he could change, he unlocked his full potential and started training and performing like a champion. Ultimately, he beat Jeff Rouse and won Olympic gold.