Unlocking Elite Team Performance with **TUG CARDS**

2025

AUTHOR:
SAŠA MIRKOVIĆ, CFP®, CEPA
FOUNDER, LEGACY COACH

In my 25+ years of working in leadership, coaching, and high-performance environments—whether it was on the rugby field, in music ensembles, in the military, or in corporate America—I've learned that elite teams don't happen by chance. They are intentionally built by placing the right people in the right seats and fostering a culture that brings out their best.

Elite teams have high trust and high performance built on great people with great character but I see many organizations that are either team in name only or above average despite wanting to be elite because of three core challenges:

- Hiring the wrong person who looked great on paper but clashed with company culture
- Losing great talent because they couldn't thrive within the existing culture
- Watching capable team members underperform because their roles weren't aligned with their natural genius

I've lived through all three. And to solve these problems, I developed a tool that I use in my own firm and with our INSPIRE Network coaching clients: **TUG Cards.**

What Are TUG Cards

TUG Cards are digital profiles that bring together insights from four of the most powerful assessments I've encountered:

1. **Values Cards** – to understand what truly matters to a person
2. **Working Genius** – to clarify which tasks energize or drain them
3. **Kolbe Assessment** – to identify how someone instinctively takes action
4. **PrinciplesYou Archetypes** – to explore personal motivations and attitudes

These cards give me and my team a clear, actionable insight into a person's whole self, not just what's on their resume.

We use them daily: in 1-on-1s, during performance conversations, and especially under pressure.

Why I Created TUG Cards

Throughout my career, I have paid a significant amount of "dumb tax" by making mistakes and learning from them. One such mistake was not taking any action on the different assessments that I took throughout my career. These assessments produced lengthy, complex reports that I couldn't make sense of. I'm not the kind of person who reads a book unless I know the ending is worth it. I wanted something immediate, useful, and actionable. Something that could help me make real-time decisions about who should be doing what and why.

Inspired by Ray Dalio's "baseball cards" at Bridgewater Associates, I built my own version: TUG Cards. It stands for **Talent and Unique Genius**. And that's what we're truly trying to uncover in people—their unique genius.

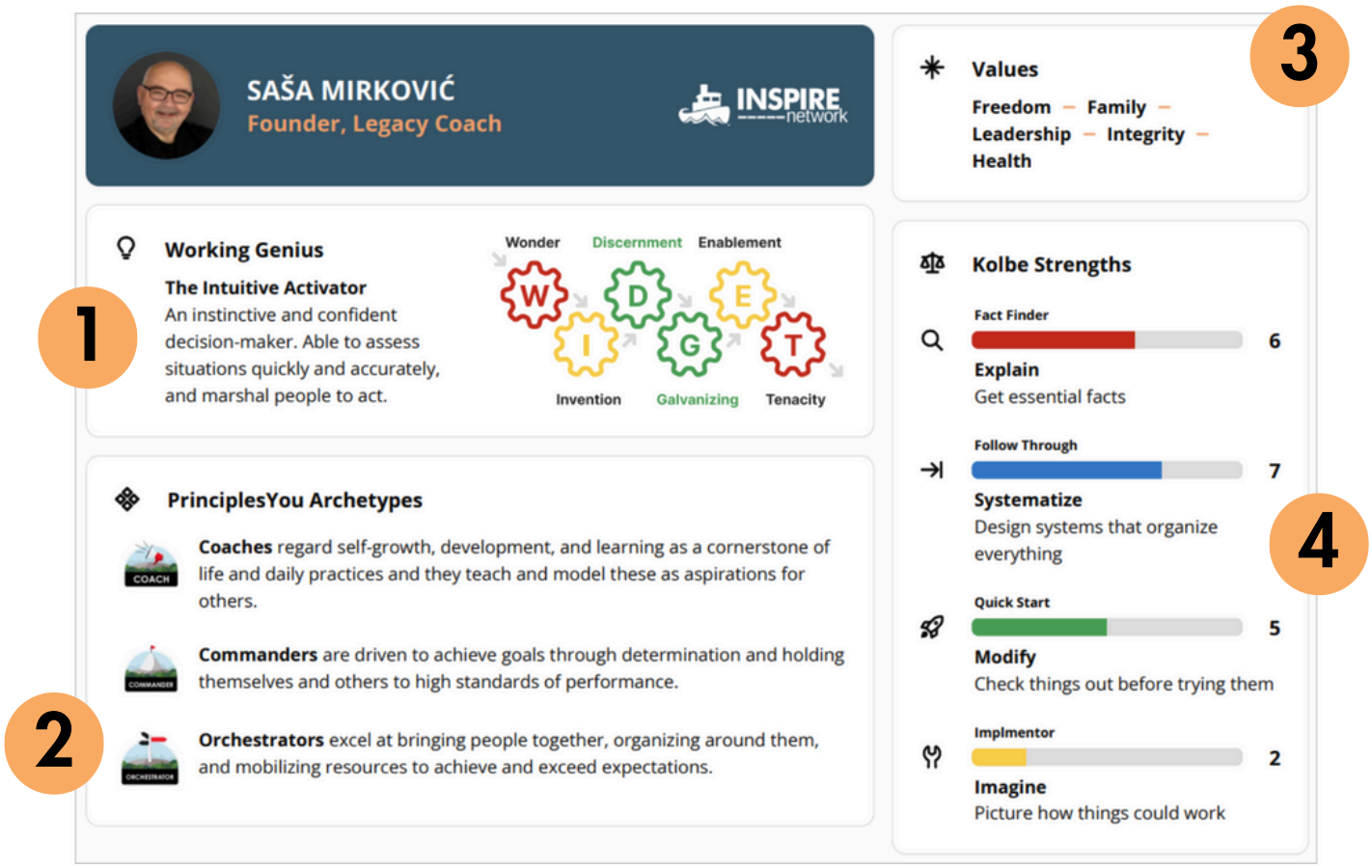
Making Reads Like a Point Guard

Legendary Duke basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski (Coach K) employed a specific offense that required his point guards to make "reads." While the team had designed plans, he designed his offense so his point guards could make "reads" while executing the play to adjust to the situation. Making "reads" means quickly figuring out what's happening, why it's happening, and what to do about it.

Like Coach K's point guards, leaders who want to build elite teams need to make "reads." TUG Cards are a tool to facilitate that.

When someone on my team isn't performing, I don't start by judging them. I pull up their TUG Card. I make a read. I ask: are they working in their genius, or are they misaligned? Are we misunderstanding each other based on how we're wired? This approach has transformed how I lead—and how my leaders coach their own teams.

See How It Works



1 **ENERGY**
Shows your top strengths at work by identifying which types of tasks energize you and fit you best.

2 **ATTITUDE**
Displays your strengths and style by measuring your personality traits, showing how you work and interact best.

3 **ALIGNMENT**
Help discover your most important beliefs and priorities, guiding your choices on what matters to you.

4 **DRIVE**
Reveals your instinctive way of taking action and measuring natural strengths in four conative action modes.

The Power of Integration: Why Four Assessments?

TUG Cards include four assessments, and each assessment brings something essential to the table:

Values display alignment.

I like to know what someone cares about. If a team member's values clash with those of our firm, we discuss it. Sometimes we celebrate that and help them move on to a place where they can thrive.

Kolbe measures drive.

I want to know how a person instinctively takes action and gets things done, revealing their unique method of operation.

Working Genius shows energy.

If you dread Monday mornings, chances are you're not working in your genius. I've learned to pay close attention to when my team members light up—and when they shut down.

PrinciplesYou describes attitude.

This assessment adds depth by exploring mindset and relational style. It gives us the language to talk about attitudes and beliefs in a constructive way.

TUG Cards bring all of this together so I can coach the whole person—not just their resume.

Elite Teams Start with Selection

I don't hire anymore. I **select.** And there's a difference.

We start with referrals, internships, and people our team already knows and respects. Then we move them through our "Guardians of the Galaxy" interview process, where senior team members assess cultural alignment. If they pass that stage, we build their TUG Card.

During the final interview, I put them under pressure. I ask about their card. I ask curveball questions. I want to see how they respond when the spotlight is on. Not because I want to intimidate them, but because real life brings pressure. Everyone shows up as their best self on their best days. I want to know how they'll show up when the days are demanding.

Culture Eats Everything

TUG Cards help me create what I call talent density—fewer, better-aligned people doing the right work. This isn't about scaling for size. It's about scaling for fit.

Several years ago, my business partner at the time and I had a difficult breakup, and he took 80% of our team. At first, this stung, but when I looked around, the remaining 20% were the people I wanted to build an elite team with. Because of that team, we retained 80% of our clients. Why? Because we had the right people left. People whose values and genius aligned with our culture. Since then, I've protected that culture fiercely.

Elite teams don't have mercenaries; they have missionaries. People who believe what we believe and give their full selves to the mission. TUG Cards ensure you have missionaries.

Practical Application: Performance = Potential – Interference

This is the formula we live by. Everyone has enormous potential. As leaders, our job is to:

- Remove interference (internal or external)
- Align people with their genius
- Provide clarity, feedback, and support

TUG Cards help me do this every day. They help me make better reads, create more powerful teams, and coach with empathy instead of judgment.

Great teams are forged, not found.

"A high-performance culture isn't about perfection. It's about permission—to be real, to be wrong, to be relentless in pursuit of better."

-Saša Mirković

Let's Build Elite Teams Together

TUG Cards aren't just a tool—they're a new language for leadership. They've changed the way I select, onboard, coach, and build culture.

If your company is ready to: - Reduce turnover - Increase team cohesion - Unlock hidden potential, then let's talk.

We'd love to show you how TUG Cards can help you create a team that rows in the same direction—and performs under pressure.

SCHEDULE YOUR ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATION HERE.

INSPIRE network

CONTACT US

team@wefacilitatechange.com
www.inspirenetworkllc.com

Want to connect in real time?
Book a meeting here!

WE FACLITATE CHANGE