



Four Simple Leadership Takeaways from the 2025 Oak Tree Learning Lab

These questions bridge team wellness and technology adoption. Use them to start conversations, build psychological safety, and create momentum as you embrace new technology.

1. How are we building a culture that embraces mental health and team resilience?

Key Insight: Culture is built through psychological safety, role modeling, and aligned policies. Wellness is not a perk, it is the foundation.

Leadership Reflection: Model the behavior you want to see. Take a walk during the workday. Fill your water bottle. Chat at the water cooler about your evening. When your team sees you doing these things, you give them permission to do the same.

Mattering Mindset Tip: Start team meetings with a wellness check-in. Ask "How are you arriving today?" and create space for honest answers. No problem-solving required, just listening.

2. How is our leadership team modelling the behaviour we want to see?

Key Insight: Teams watch what leaders do far more than they listen to what leaders say. Your behavior becomes the culture.

Leadership Reflection: Share your own wellness practices. Tell your team what you do to stay well. It does not need to be fancy: morning tea, a walk, calling a friend. Make it normal to talk about how we take care of ourselves.

Mattering Mindset Tip: Ask the quietest person first. In your next meeting, invite the person who talks least to share their perspective before jumping to solutions. Create space for voices you don't usually hear.

3. How do we build a culture where people feel safe experimenting with AI?

Key Insight: AI adoption fails when it feels threatening. It succeeds when teams see AI as a thinking partner, not a replacement.

Leadership Reflection: Share an AI experiment you tried and what you learned. Frame it as exploration: "I'm trying to figure this out too." Vulnerability creates safety.

+ai Mindset Tip: Host a 30-minute conversation where anyone can ask anything about AI. No question is too basic. Normalize not knowing.

4. How could I stretch myself this month by using AI as both a strategic resource and a tactical tool?

Key Insight: Co-creation happens through jam sessions. You riff, revise, and respond until you get what you need. AI becomes powerful when you treat it like collaboration, not automation.

Leadership Reflection: Pick one strategic question you're wrestling with as a leader. Use AI to explore it: "I'm trying to decide X. What are five perspectives I might be missing?" See what patterns emerge.

+ai Mindset Tip: Experiment with ChatGPT Projects. Set up one project for something you're working on long-term. Upload relevant files, add custom instructions about your goals and tone, and use it as your thinking partner for a month.

Lets Keep Learning

These questions are starting points. The real work happens in the conversations they create. Ready to explore more? Connect with Curt at curt@foursimplewords.ca or 519.580.9725.

Leadership takeaways from the Oak Tree Learning Lab, October 2025
Brought to you by Four Simple Words and the Oak Tree Project
foursimplewords.ca | oaktreeguelph.ca

