

NICK GRAYSON (2022)



**As soon as I saw the line-up of speakers for the AgriLeader Forum I knew I had to go.**

Usually, on the journey home from such events you go over the key points in your head

and feel re-energised about your own business for a day or so. Never has an event had me still thinking about the ‘take home messages’ several weeks down the line.

The most refreshing thing was that virtually none of the speakers had any idea about agriculture at all. They were simply the best people possible to speak about leadership and positive mindset. The event had a very strong emphasis on networking, which felt great after the last couple of years!

Usually at these events I would make a beeline for everyone I know and spend the conference with them, but we were allocated seating for the entirety of the event. This allowed me to network, and speak to more people, and I have returned home with a few more friends which I still speak to regularly. The networking continued well into the early hours of day two and we had some fantastic thought-provoking conversations.

A standout moment of the conference for me was at the final session of day one when we heard from Ben Akers, the founder of Talk Club. Talk Club is a talking and listening club for men that hopes to keep you mentally fit by providing a secure and private space to share and support others. I couldn’t quite believe I was sat in a room filled with farmers, listening to someone talk about the importance of men’s mental health.

The point from this session that I still think about today is trying to ask people ‘how are you out of 10?’ rather than the usual ‘how are you’, to try and encourage more communication than the usual ‘fine thanks!’. My friends and I regularly ask each other how they are out of 10 now, it’s been a great tool for us all to use to open up more.

Rebecca Roberts took the first session of day one. Rebecca is a mindset coach and spoke about comparing our own lives to a computer keyboard. She explained that, without the spacebar nothing else on the keyboard makes any sense, and we should live our own lives like this and always ensure we maintain our ‘space bar’. We should create space, and time for ourselves so that we can see things more clearly. This concept struck a chord with me and is something I am making a conscious effort to try and uphold in my own life.

I would go as far as to say that the AHDB AgriLeader forum has been the best conference I have attended and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Future Farmers of Yorkshire for giving me the opportunity to attend.

