

Future-Proofing the Next Generation of Researchers: Versatile Skills & Strategic Adaptability

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LinkedIn & USC

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Director of UX Research,
Marketplaces



MS in Applied Psychology
University of Southern California

Faculty

Claremont Graduate University PhD
Psychology
Claremont Graduate University MA
Psychology
Columbia University
BA Psychology

Education



Naomi Grewal, Ph.D.

Experience



Program Director, Professor of Consumer Psychology



Master of Science in
Applied Psychology



Experience

immersion

Co-Founder
Immersion Neuroscience

Industry

Independent Consultant
Consumer Experience



DEFENSE ADVANCED
RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY



Pomona
College



PITZER
COLLEGE



SCRIPPS
THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE
• CLAREMONT •



CLAREMONT
MCKENNA
— COLLEGE —



Claremont
Graduate
University

Claremont Graduate University PhD
Psychology

Claremont Graduate University MA
Psychology

Cal Poly Humboldt
BA Psychology

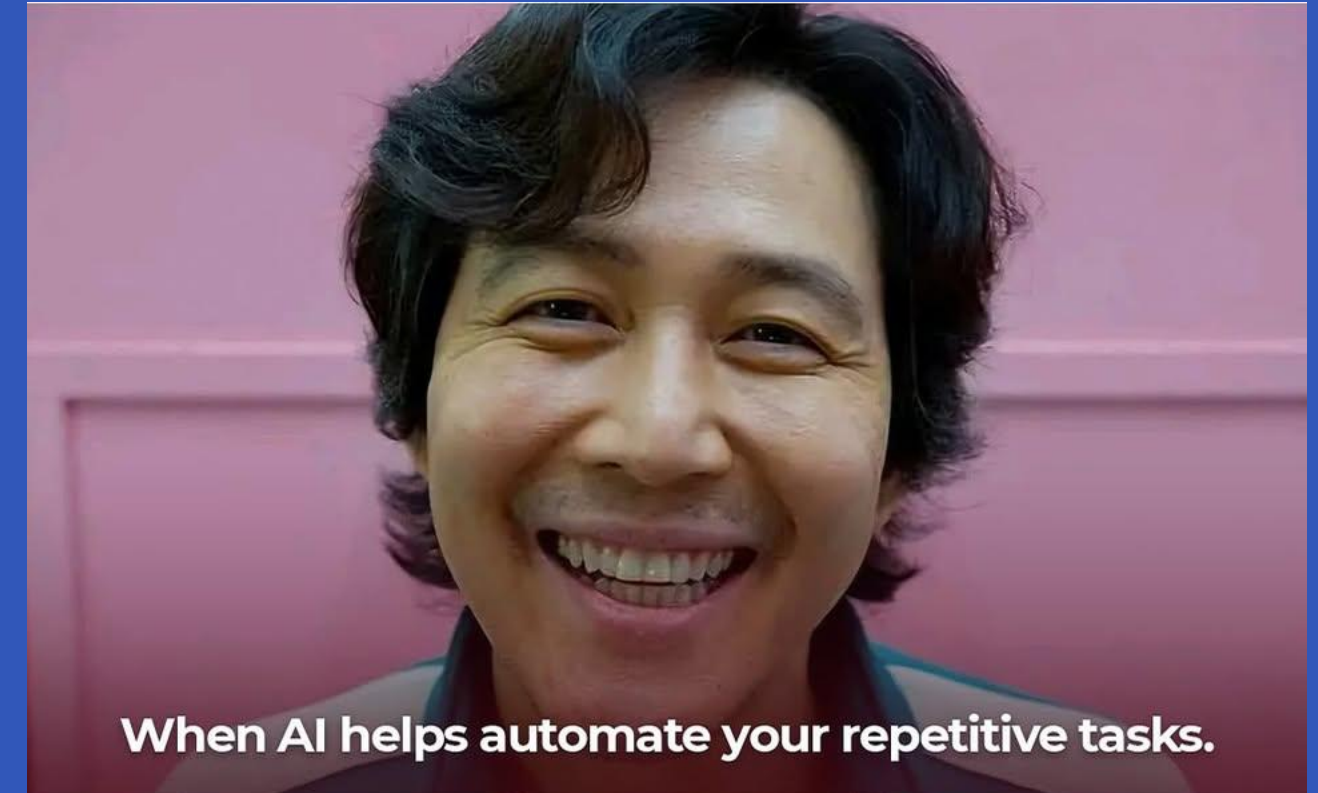
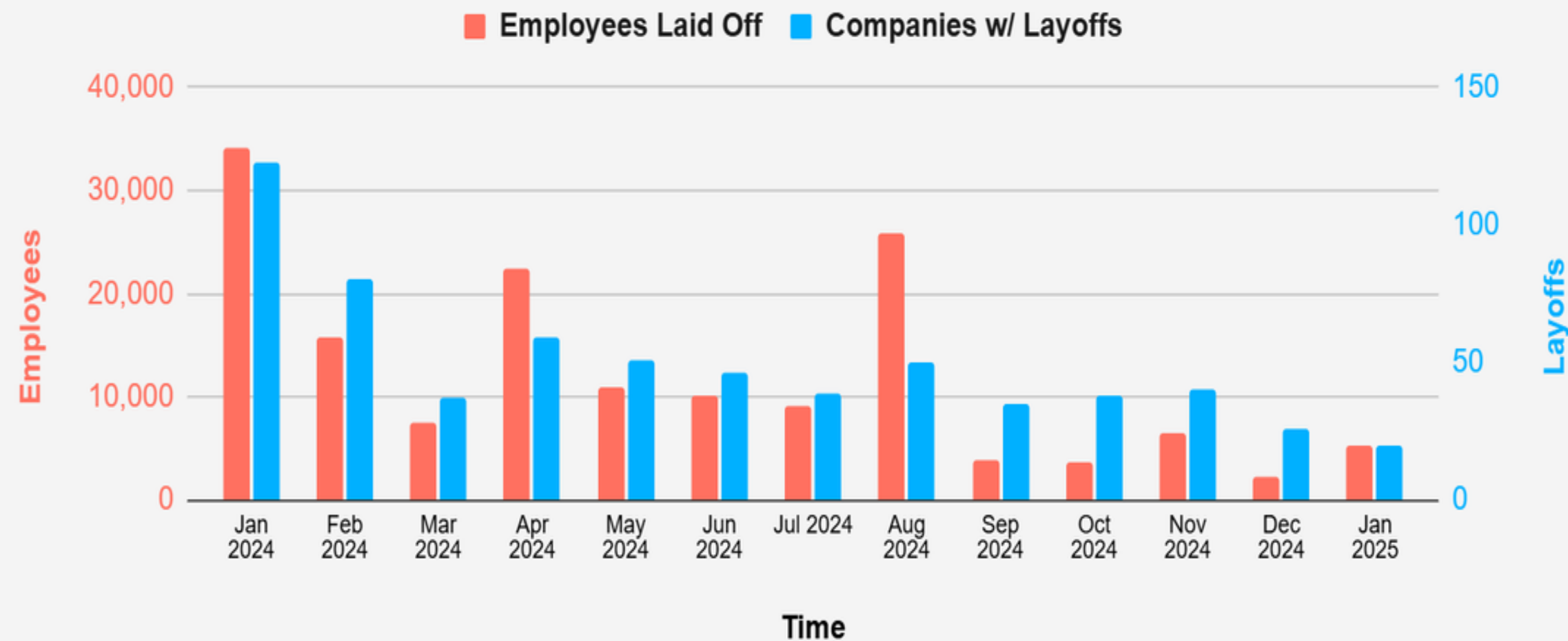
Education

Jorge Barraza, Ph.D.

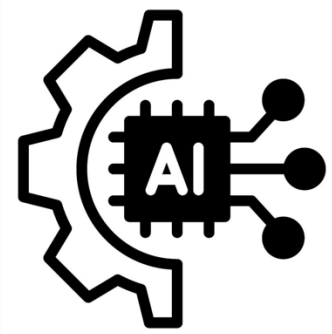
Real Life Squid Game

Tech layoffs in 2024-2025

Source: <https://layoffs.fyi>



The Research Industry is at an Inflection Point



AI & automation are transforming research

Traditional methods are being disrupted, requiring new approaches and skillsets.



Business expectations from researchers are evolving

Researchers need to demonstrate a wider range of skills to drive business impact.



Traditional skills alone are no longer enough

The research landscape demands versatility, strategic thinking, and technological fluency.

Raising the bar. Again.

Yesterday's Researchers vs. Tomorrow's Researchers

Past Skills

- Deep expertise
- Siloed work
- Traditional methods

Future Skills

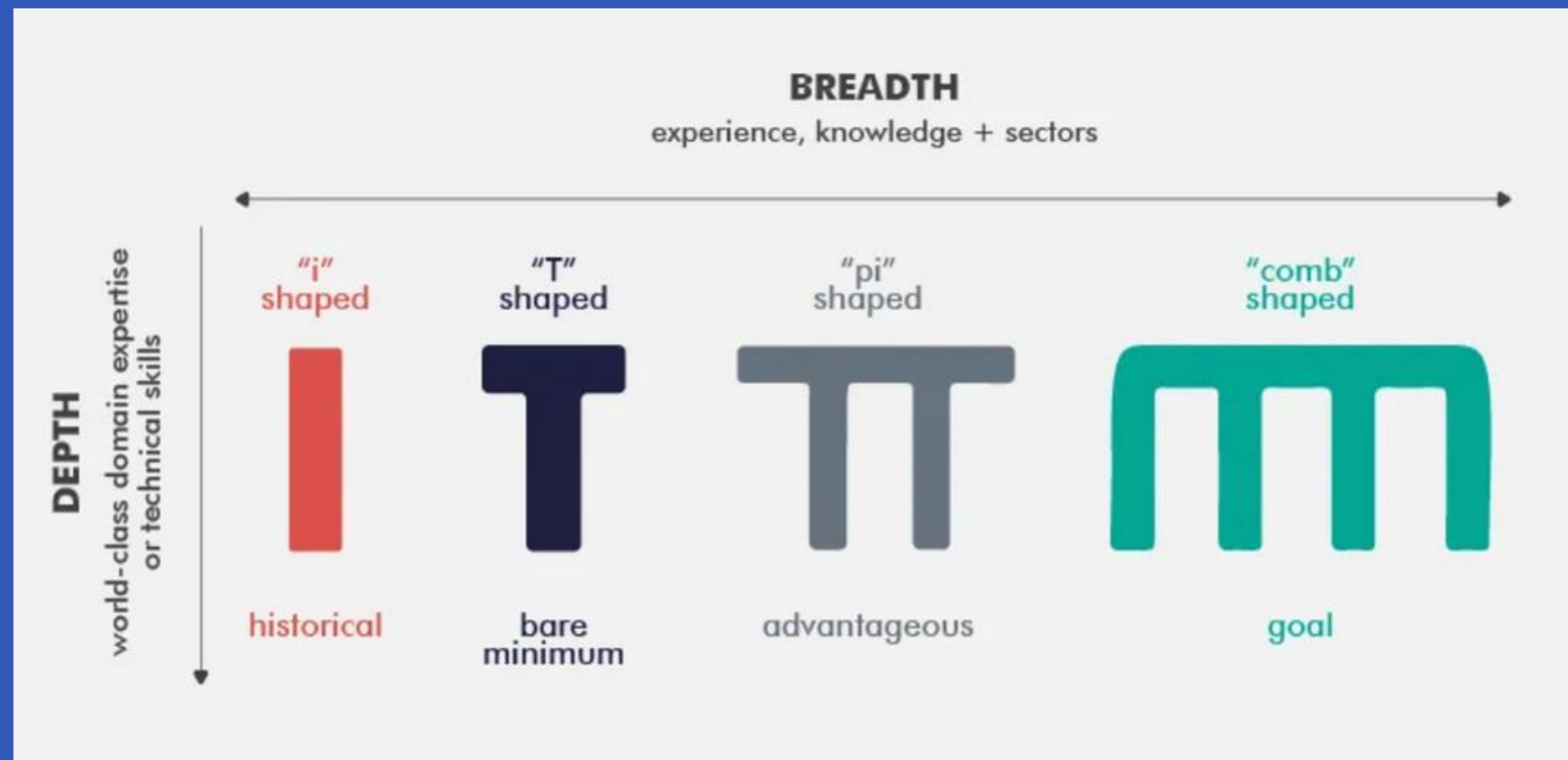
- T-shaped, Pi-shaped; Comb-shaped skillsets
- Strategic influence
- AI fluency

The Rise of the Comb-Shaped Researcher

Deep expertise in multiple areas

Broad knowledge in strategy, business, AI, product, and design

Soft skills crucial for navigating a changing research landscape



Bridging the Gap: Academic Training & Industry Needs

Academia



- Strong research foundation
- Critical thinking
- Methodologies

Industry



- Business impact
- Stakeholder communication
- Cross-functional collaboration

Widen Your Perspective

Insights Blind Spots



**Confirmation
Bias**



**Intuition
Based**



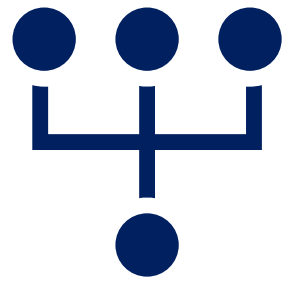
**Focused in
Story**



**Need for Quick
Solutions**

A Scientific Mindset

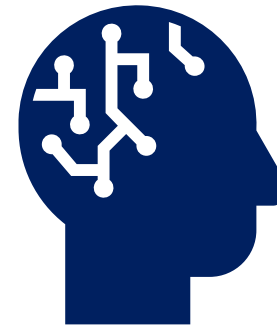
Guiding Principles



**Possibility of
Alternative
Answers**



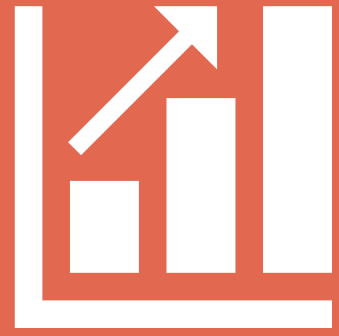
**Empirically
Based**



**Grounded in
Existing
Knowledge**



**Applies
Critical Analysis**



Future-Proofing Your Career:

The 4 Must-Have Skills

Research & Data Mastery

Business & Strategic Thinking

AI & Technology Fluency

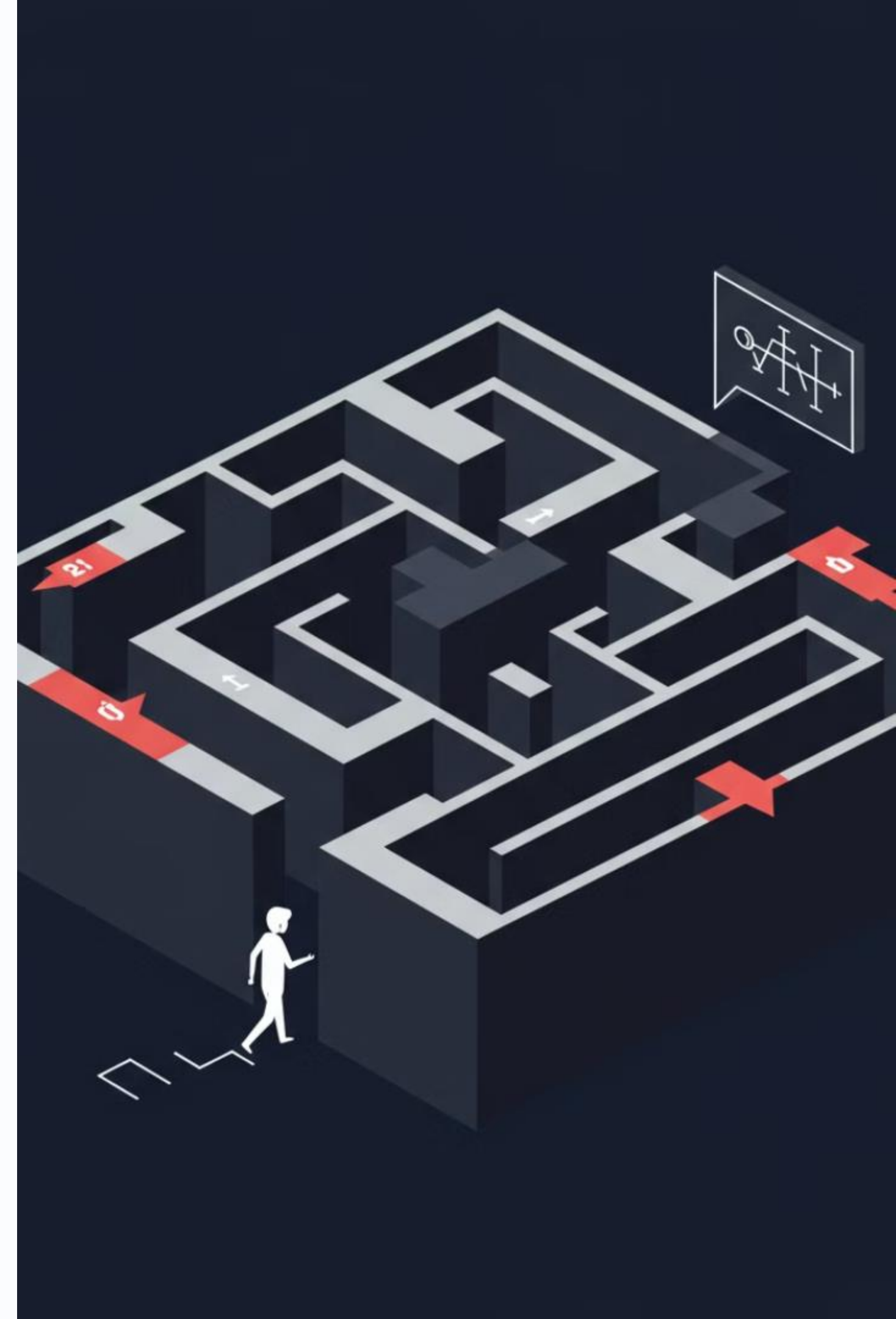
Communication & Influence with Credibility

Navigating Change: Thriving in an Uncertain Industry

Research budgets shift, teams get restructured.

AI & automation disrupt traditional methods.

Adaptability is the key to staying relevant and thriving in an uncertain industry.





Enhancing Research Capabilities with AI

How AI enhances insights, not replaces human analysis.

Using AI to scale impact, automate tasks, and drive faster insights.

Data gatherer into strategic interpreter.

Let's Discuss!