

Building the higher order management consultancy skills needed to excel in the AI era

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Imaginative thinking for the AI era

An avalanche of change is heading our way

- Biggest game changer in our careers
- Average is coming for free
- We need to up our AI game



Our Session Overview:

- Being a management consultant in the likely new social order
- Being a management consultant in a consultancy sector that is blurring etc.
- The skills needed to be a management consultant in the new era (our main focus)





What lies ahead?

Let's look at three
different options...

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AI will 'float all boats'

Global ten-year GDP will rise by 7% due to the economic gains anticipated from AI
Goldman and Sachs

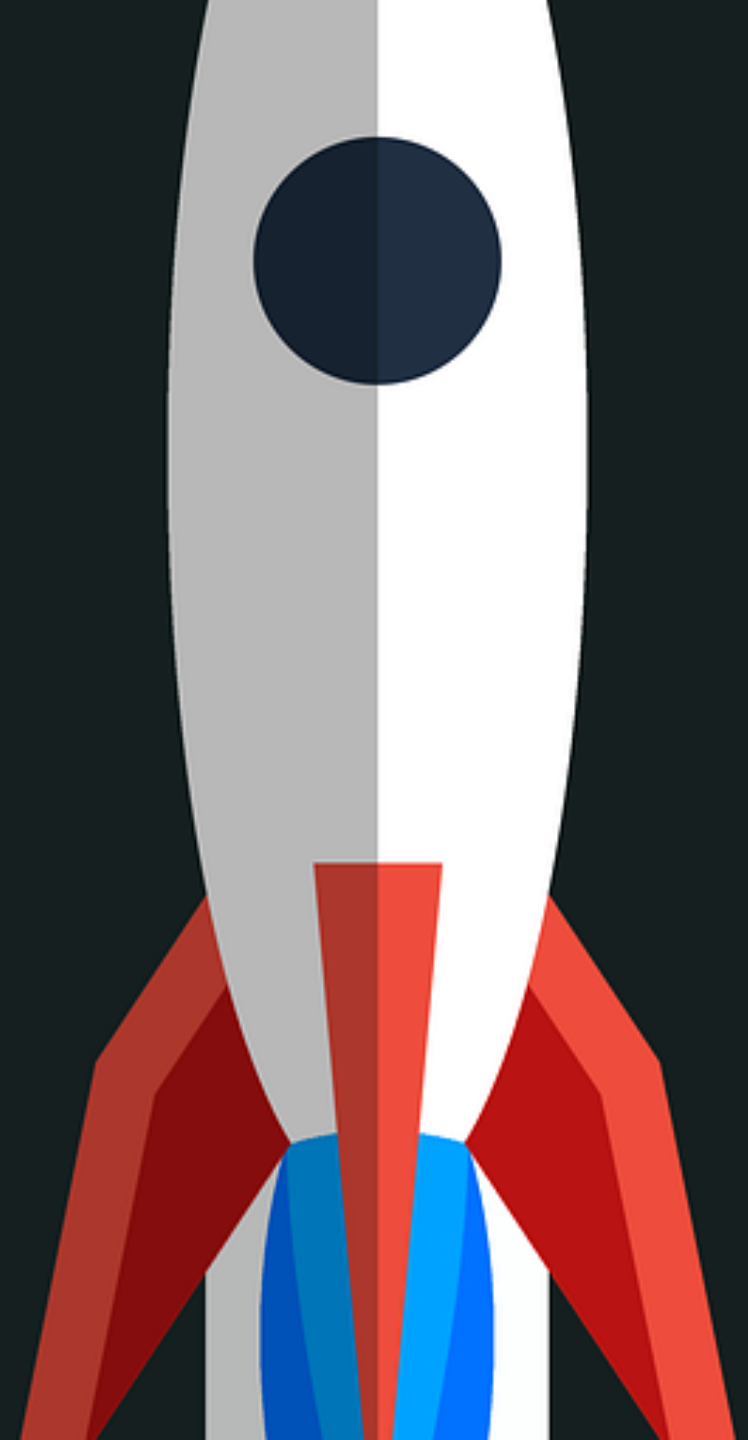


The AI as an enabler

80% of the US workforce will see 10% of their role being taken by AI

20% of the workforce will have half of their job substituted by AI

Eloundou et al (OpenAI)





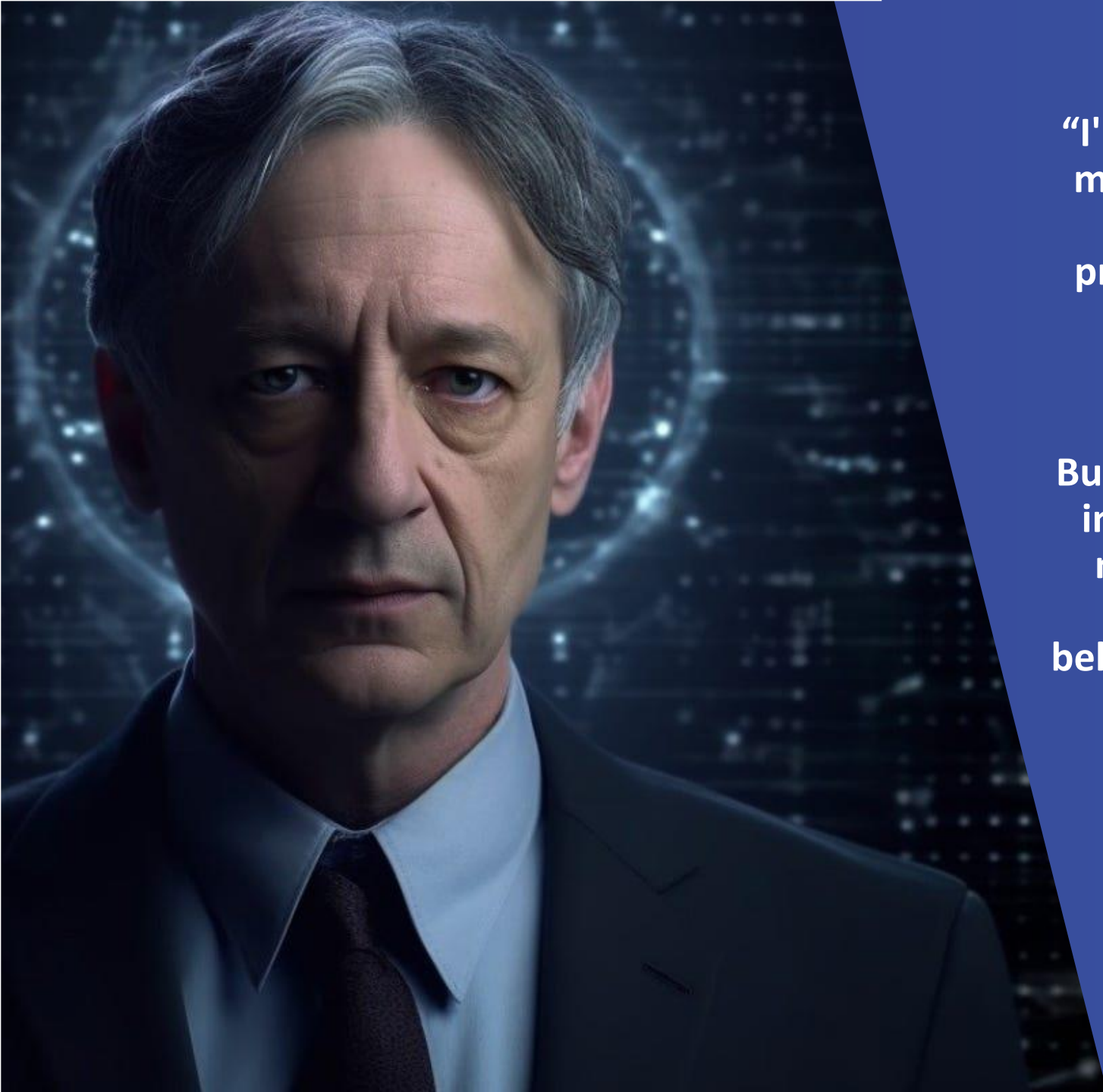
“There will come a point where no job is needed [...] you can have a job if you want to have a job for personal satisfaction, but AI will be able to do everything”

Elon Musk

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AI doesn't need to have the intelligence of the smartest humans to completely reshape whole sectors of the economy - AI that is 'just smart enough' may have the capacity displace millions of jobs.





“I'm very worried about AI taking over lots of mundane jobs. That should be a good thing. It's going to lead to a big increase in productivity which leads to a big increase in wealth and if that wealth was equally distributed that would be great.

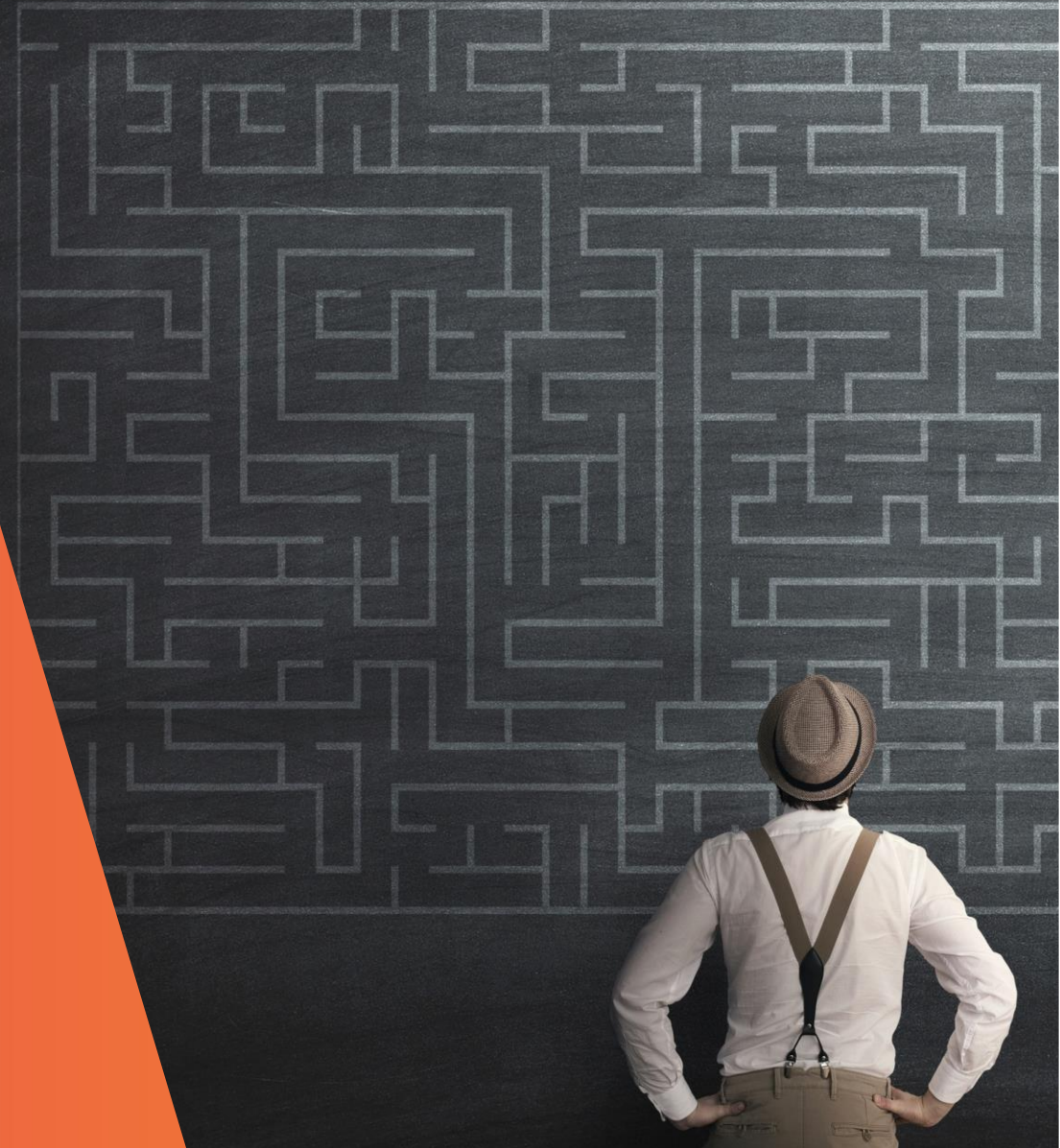
But it's not going to be. In the systems we live in that wealth is going to go to the rich and not to the people whose jobs get lost and that's going to be very bad for society I believe. It's going to increase the gap between rich and poor.”

Geoffrey Hinton ... ‘The Godfather of AI’

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While the path forward is not (yet) clear, we do know that doing nothing is certainly not an option.

So, what does the future hold for young people entering the workplace – **where will the jobs be?**



“It is the first time in history that technology may be eliminating jobs faster than it creates new ones. If so, then our economic and social systems will be remade potentially in a disruptive and destabilising way”

Bill Gates

“It's clear that a lot of mid-level intellectual jobs are going to disappear and if you ask me which jobs are safe, my best bet is plumbing because these things aren't very good at physical manipulation yet”

Geoffrey Hinton

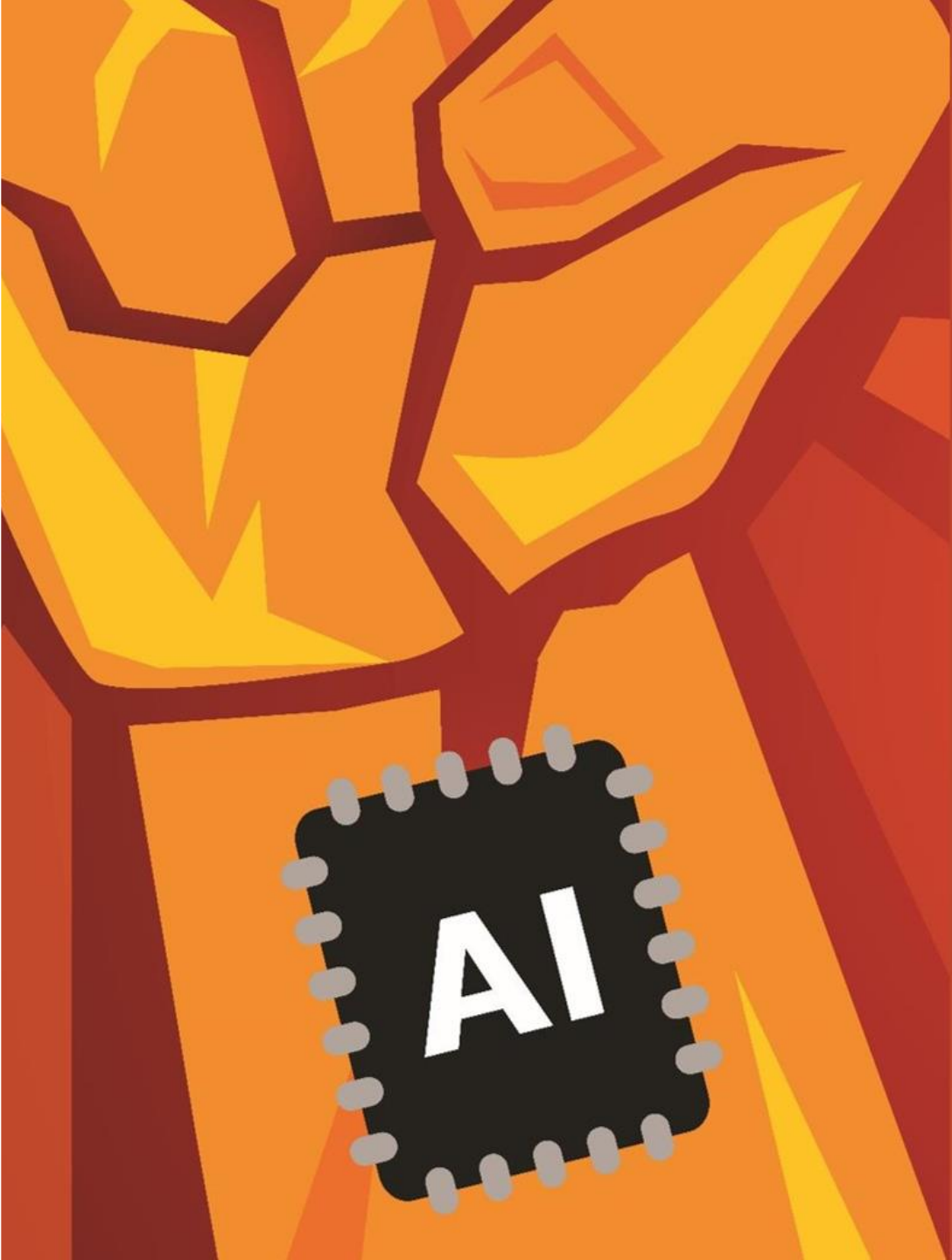


“There's no economic law that says that when technology advances everybody necessarily benefits, some people, even a majority of people, could be made worse off”

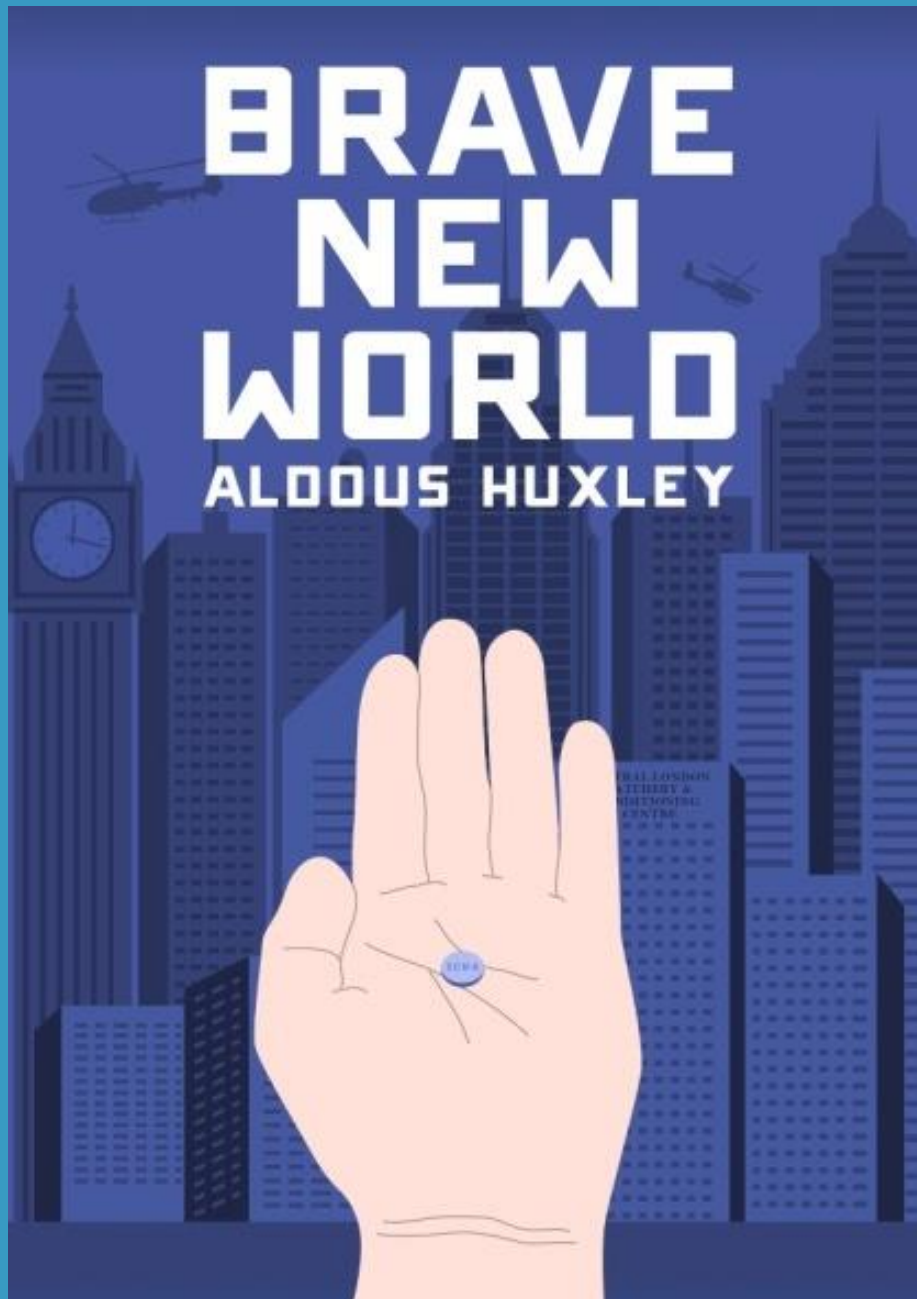
Erik Brynjolfsson

(Professor and Senior Fellow at the Stanford Institute for Human-centred AI)

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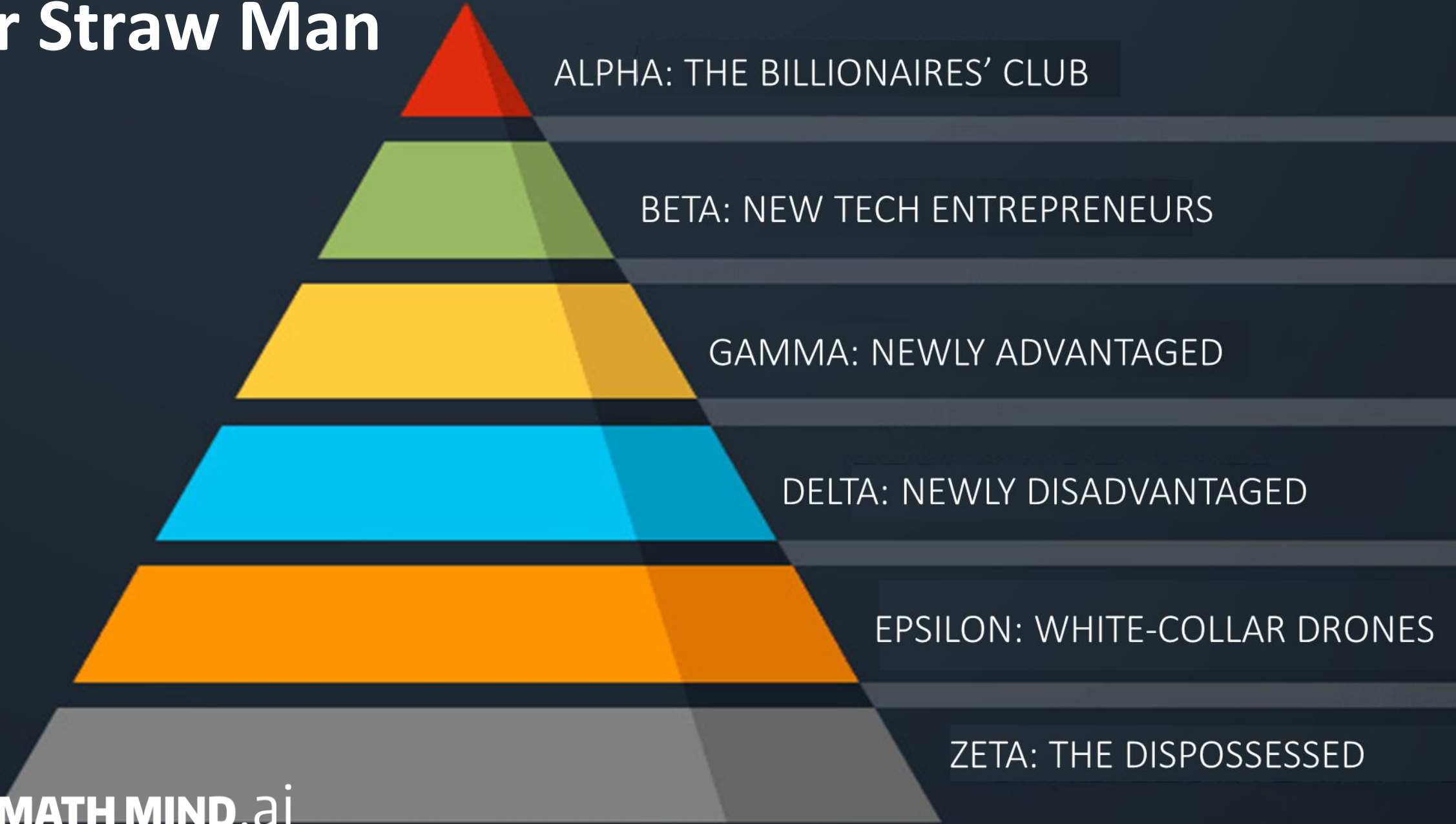


Let us get underway
with a review of what
impact AI is going to
have on the shape of
society...



Let's look at a plausible possible future – borrowing from Aldous Huxley's Brave New World' ...

Our Straw Man



Alpha: The Billionaires' Club

These are the people who control the capital and the core tools of the AI economy – **they control the game board.**

AI will increase the number of the **uberwealthy** - individuals who have attracted two-thirds of all the new world wealth that has been created since 2020. Given their bandwidth, access to technology, ability to raise finance and networking capabilities – they have been able to attract significant wealth.





Beta: New Tech Entrepreneurs

This group will take the AI tools provided by the Alphas and find novel and creative ways to apply them.

The widespread roll-out and availability of generative AI models has unleashed a wave of developmental creativity.

- In addition to developing AI applications, the deployment of AI tools lowers the entry barrier to broader tech ventures.
- Big rewards will flow to these AI entrepreneurs.



Gamma: Newly Advantaged

In addition to new roles created, there will be existing knowledge workers who get to leverage new AI tools to their advantage

AI will open up opportunities for those whose particular talents have been historically undervalued by the world of work.

They have dominant right-brain creativity, outside-the-box thinking skills, heightened sensitivity and an ability to deal with complexity in an innovative and compassionate way - things with which AI struggles.

Delta: Newly Disadvantaged

As the democratization and levelling up of core knowledge and key skills take hold, Deltas will find themselves at a comparative disadvantage.

Given their education and skills, Deltas had thought that there was a comparatively secure career ahead of them. But their world is likely to be turned upside down with a downgrading of their status and rewards.

They could become frustrated by the subordinate role they now have to play in the new AI era.





Epsilon: White-Collar Drones

The debate about AI taking away a rewarding career is all pretty academic - they have **already given up on the idea of building a traditional career.**

Happy to coast through the new world of work - getting through the day with some help from AI if it's there, and hoping they can hang onto their job.

This trend seems to be telling us that more people are looking for self-actualisation and ways of **expressing themselves outside of the classic work environment.**

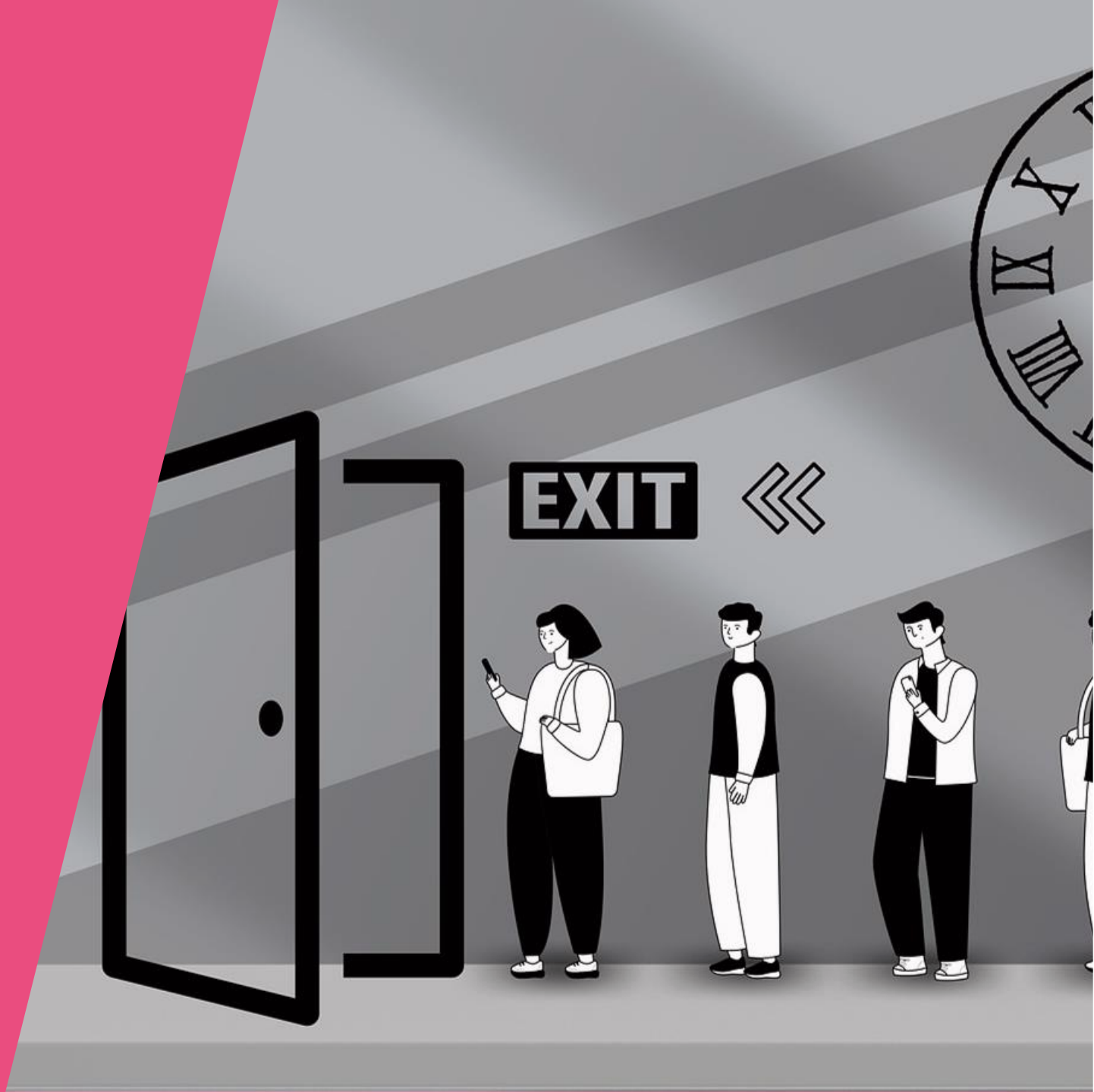
Zeta: The Dispossessed

Evidence tells us that there will be those who will get completely **detached from the workforce and will need help.**

To what extent will the rise in white-collar job displacement create a **class of people disconnected from the workforce and the rewards of the AI-shaped workplace.**

It is difficult to estimate the scale – but it could be high!

These people then need to find employment beyond knowledge work or **rely on a *Citizen's Income.***





In the world of
knowledge work and
business &
management
consultancy ... there
will be the 'newly
advantaged' and the
'newly disadvantaged'

AI is so fast moving that an ongoing propensity to pivot and change is essential.

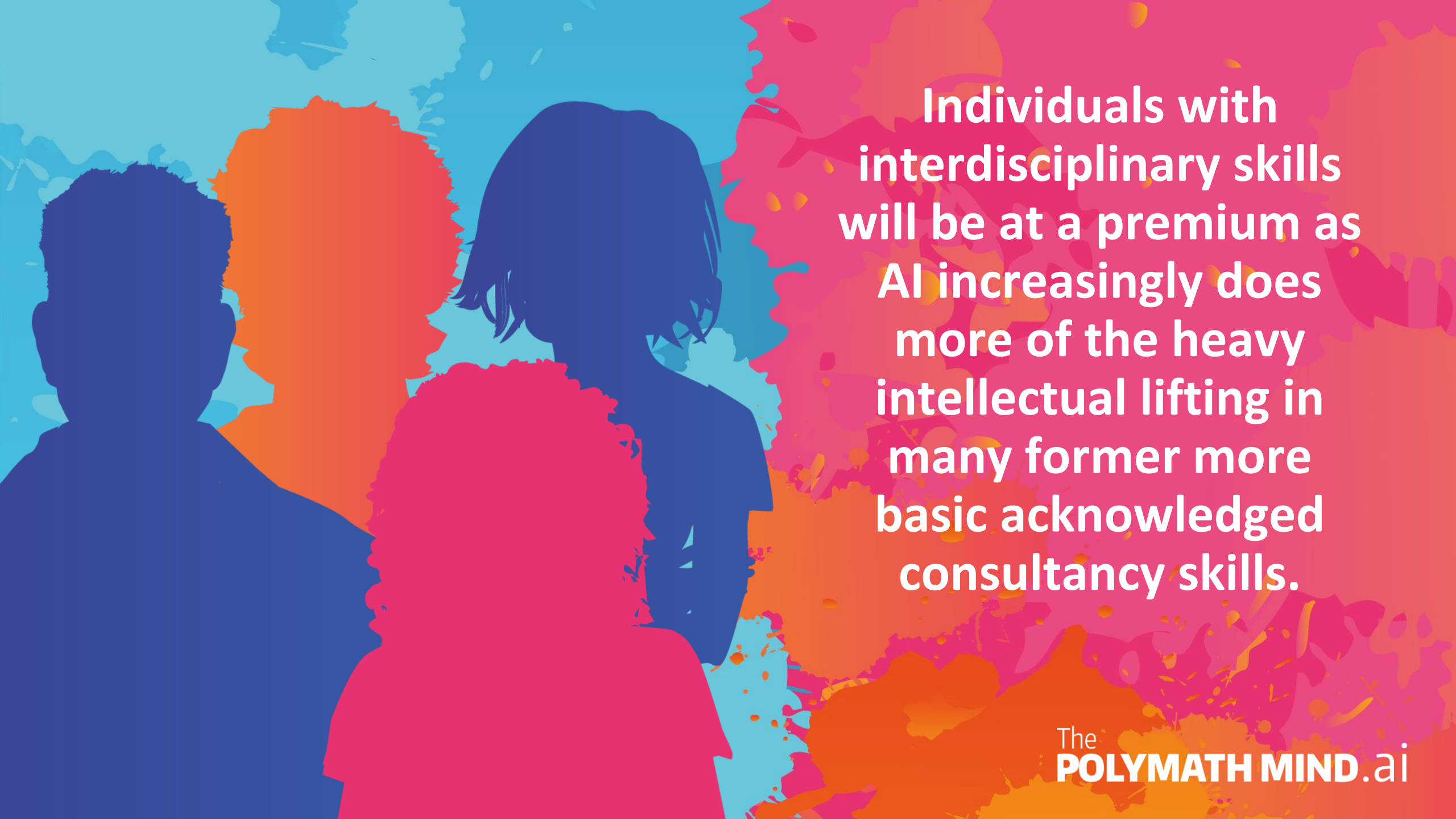
Everybody needs to be AI fluent.

Not coming across as token nor jumping on the bandwagon AI wise, but, being authentic in building out from genuine **core skills**.


What is your AI strategy?

E.g: at the leading edge of AI innovation versus focusing on being a strategic consultant with an appreciation of AI?




The image features four stylized silhouettes of people's heads and shoulders in profile, facing right. From left to right, the silhouettes are colored dark blue, orange, dark blue, and red. The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping shapes and colors, including shades of blue, orange, red, and pink, with a textured, watercolor-like appearance. The overall mood is modern and dynamic.

Individuals with interdisciplinary skills will be at a premium as AI increasingly does more of the heavy intellectual lifting in many former more basic acknowledged consultancy skills.



The 'polymath mind' summarises this emphasis on acquiring the interdisciplinary skills that are now required to deal with complex business problems.





The skills needed to
thrive in the AI-shaped
work-place

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Welcome to our Magnificent 7 Power Skills

The
AI Interface

The
Sense-Maker

The
Critical
Thinker

The
Forward
Thinker

The
Audacious
Creator

The
Inspiring
Communicator

The
Galvanizing
Leader



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The AI Interface

She has adapted quickly to AI, not fighting against it - recognising where AI will be superior and focusing on the areas where there can be a productive symbiotic relationship.

In a society where AI acts as a qualifier – levelling up individuals and organisations – she is a bridge enabling collaboration **between AI and colleagues** ... driving effective differentiation.

The Sense-Maker

He is the organization's **'wide angle lens'** with a panorama view of how interconnected events are likely to play out.

'Developing an acute sense of what fits with what, what springs from what, and what leads to what' Isaiah Berlin.

He can evaluate the **'weight'**, **'power'** and **'direction'** of data, information and knowledge to understand the full context of what is actually happening.





The Critical Thinker

She is a 'crystalliser', whose focus is on 'adductive' reasoning prowess ... *arriving at an informed solution in the face of uncertainty and imperfect information.*

She goes beyond deductive and inductive reasoning ... *to make that final leap to the best possible interpretation of events.*

She contextualises a host of subtle, nuanced clues, hints, hunches and educated guesses *in applying informed intuition.*

The Audacious Creator

He knows that today **average comes for free and is on top of his creative game** - he can conjure up out of thin air an idea that has no precedent - **the blank page holds no fears.**

But he enjoys working in the generative AI ideas playground as a **'creative prompt engineer'** to nudge, nag and stimulate the initial AI output to the next level

He enjoys a creative, strategic dialogue with stakeholders to identify insights – he knows that **insights are created, not found.**





The Forward Thinker

She knows her ability to **mentally time travel** – to recall memories and experiences and fashion them to create possible futures - is unique to human beings.

She draws on what it is to be human to *make the leap to the 'future histories'* that we as a society want to embrace.

She has the ability to **think about the big uncertainties** or disruptors that are coming down the track.

The Inspiring Communicator

He is a persuasive influencer who knows how to create *and transmit critical powerful transformational psychological messages* that will land with stakeholders.

He is a master storyteller who can finesse the communications structures AI has initially selected by adding the **twists, surprises, hooks and insights** into the human psyche that the computer has yet to, and may never, experience.

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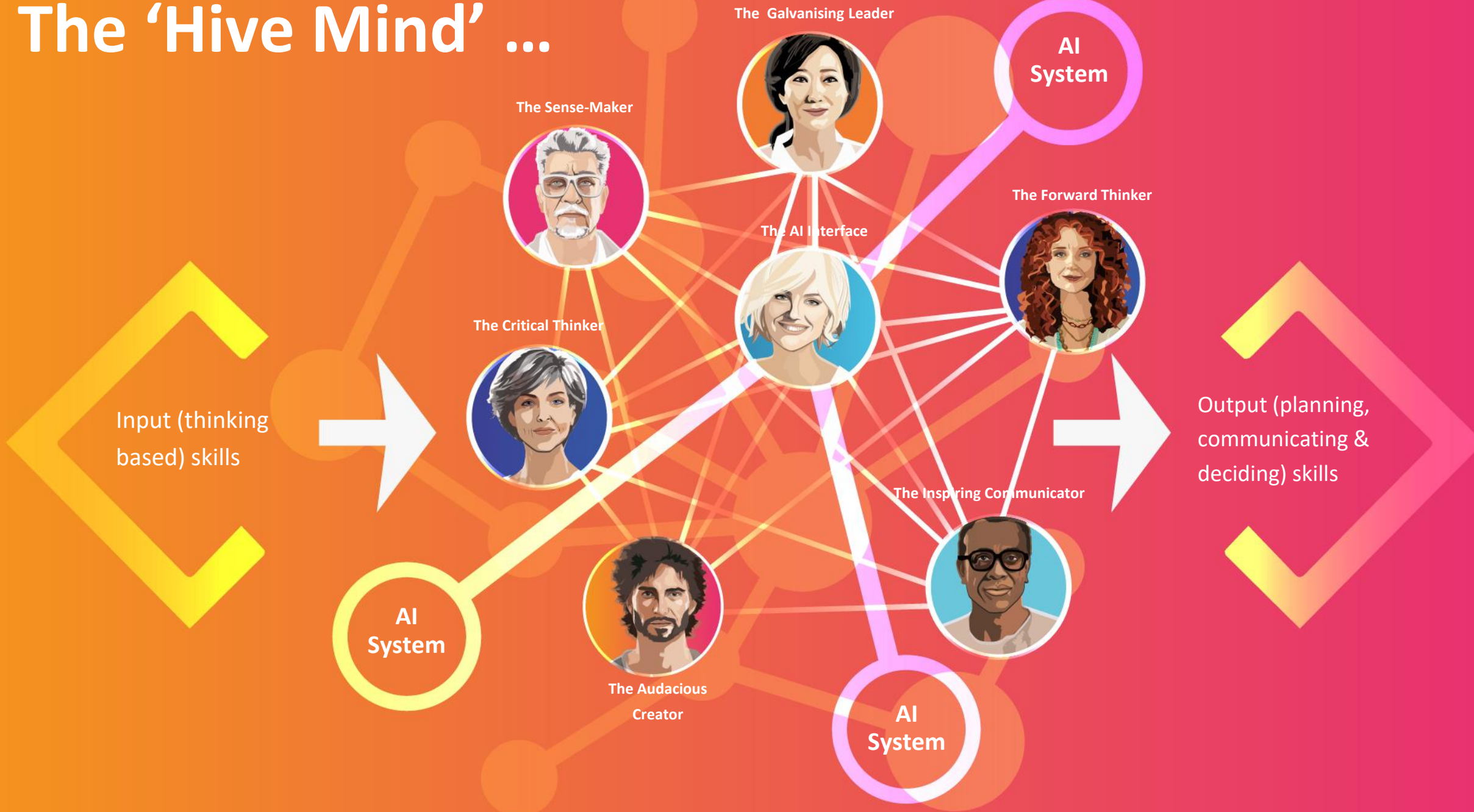
The Galvanising Leader

She is an *energy radiator and problem simplifier* to whom people will warm.

She is someone who knows which levers to pull to successfully manage people in ambiguous and stressful scenarios and *offers sensitive, compassionate, empathetic, leadership.*

She is the *linchpin* who can walk into chaos and **create order**, someone who can invent, connect, network, create and make things happen.

The 'Hive Mind' ...





Where does that leave our consultants?

What skills will have 'future value'?
Consider revisiting their own skill set
Help their clients instil an AI fluent polymath mind culture within their own organisations.

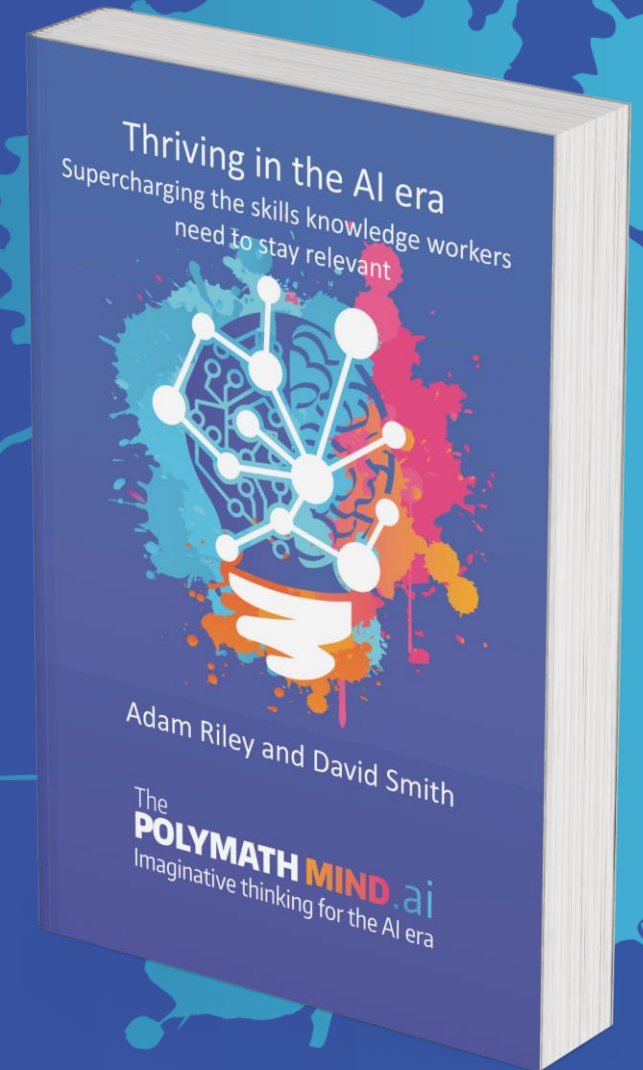
A network diagram consisting of several blue circular nodes of varying sizes connected by thin blue lines. The nodes are arranged in a roughly circular pattern around the central text, with some nodes being larger than others. The background is a solid dark blue color.

**An effective
change
management
program is
required**

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What faces us as we
come to terms with
what AI can and
cannot do for us?

Buckle up, it's going to get
bumpy...



Please talk to us off-line about how we might be able to support you.

Thank you for listening.

For more discussion on the impact of AI on knowledge and work please visit Substack:

polymathmind.substack.com

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