

ZENDESK INSIGHTS

Agent of the future according to CX leaders & agents

Looking 1, 3, & 5 Years Ahead



**Zendesk Insights team surveyed
600 senior CX leaders and agents
across the US about the state of CX
and the evolving role of agents**

Survey fielded September 2023

Methodology Note: Respondents were surveyed on 60 attributes of the future of customer service agents and asked to classify whether they thought those attributes would come to pass in 1, 3, 5 years, 5+ years, never, or already happening. The attributes were then indexed from 0-10 years out and mapped to the Three Horizons model.

**CX leaders say
AI is the most
important
technology
shaping the
future of CX,
and that they
need to step up
and do more**

84%
of CX leaders

believe their organization needs to do more to prepare for the future of customer service.

67% of agents

82%
of CX leaders

are rethinking their entire customer experience based on recent advancements in artificial intelligence.

69% of agents

80%
of CX leaders

believe predictive customer service will become the norm.

62% of agents

CX leaders expect human agents to have an irreplaceable role, yet expect AI to decrease the number of agents needed

85%
of CX leaders

agree that AI will result in a significant decrease in the number of customer service agents.

74% of agents

84%
of CX leaders

believe agents will need to be retrained on more advanced, complex skills to be prepared for the future.

72% of agents

78%
of CX leaders

agree that human customer service agents are irreplaceable.

69% of agents

Role of agents will evolve dramatically over time as AI's role matures



Within 1 Year

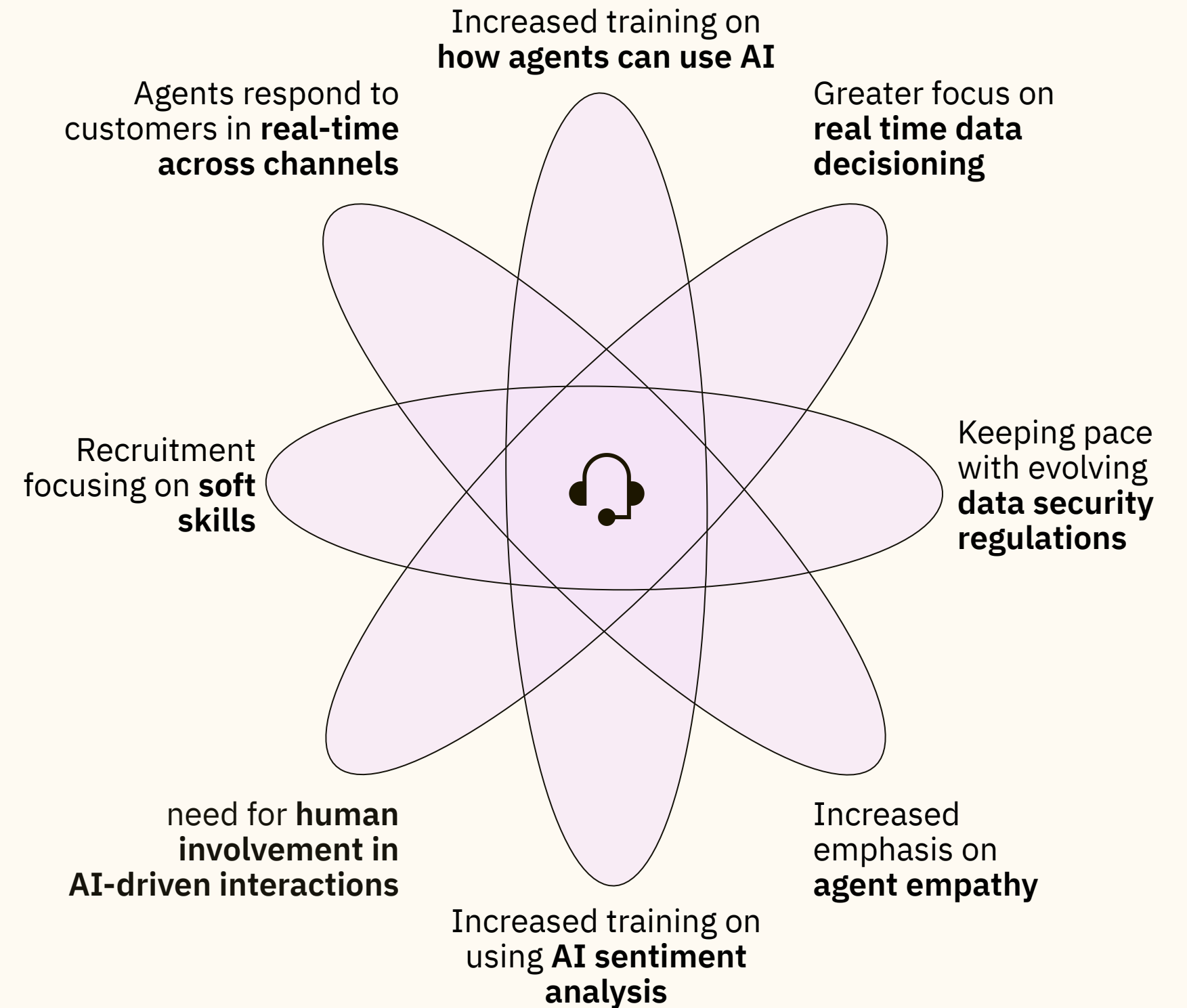
Agent as troubleshooter

AI as traffic cop

Quick wins in training agents on generative AI for CX without disrupting existing operations.

Agents are the “human in the loop” monitoring and assessing AI outputs before they go to customers.

Short-term focus on soft skills and empathy.



3 Years

Agent as expert

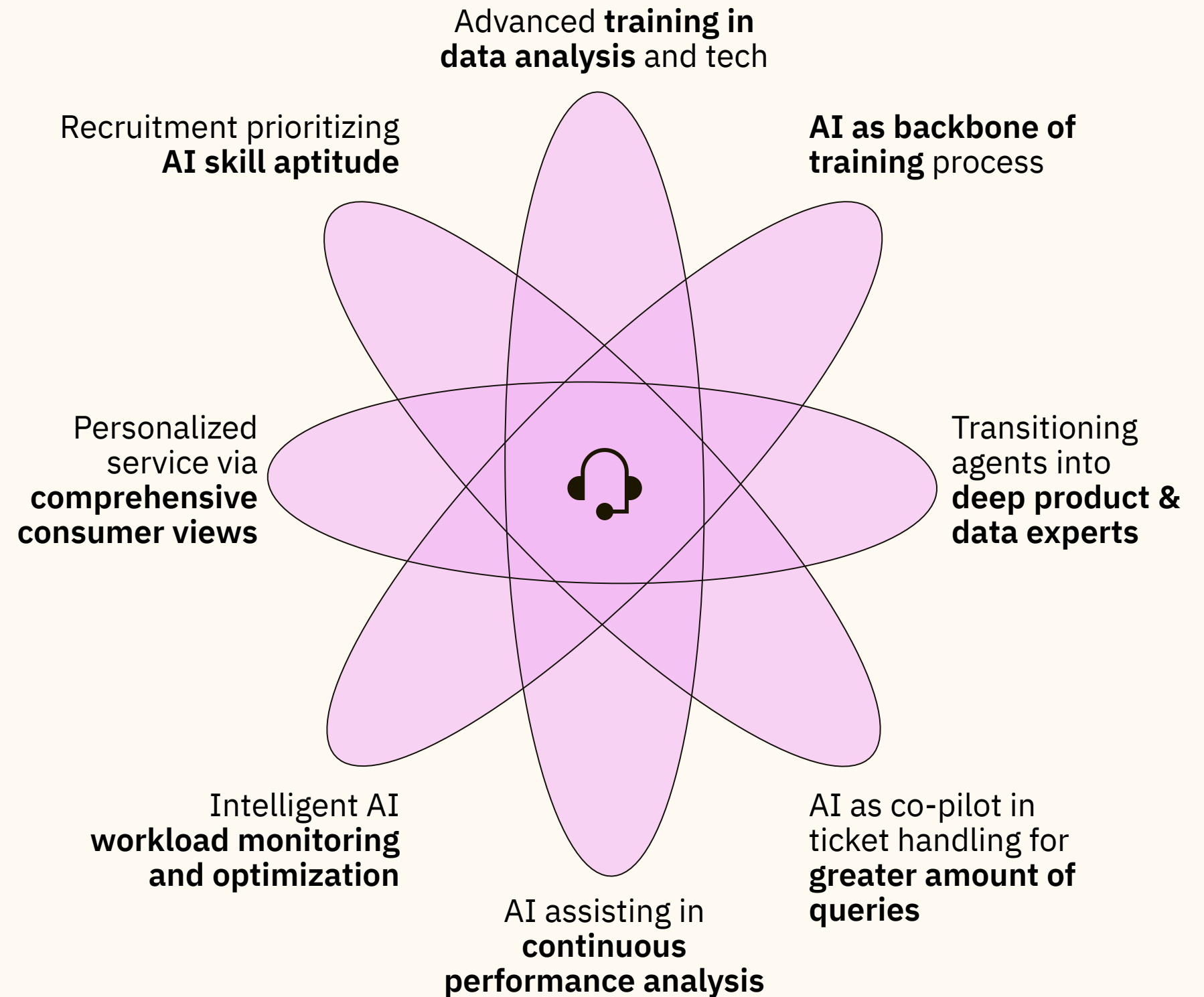
AI as co-pilot

Deliver highly personalized service via better customer data

Greater focus on harder skills like data, tech, security, and analysis.

AI integral to the training process: virtual coaching, soft skills training, and mental wellbeing.

Agents recruited primarily on their ability to use AI-driven customer service tools.



5 Years

Agent as conductor

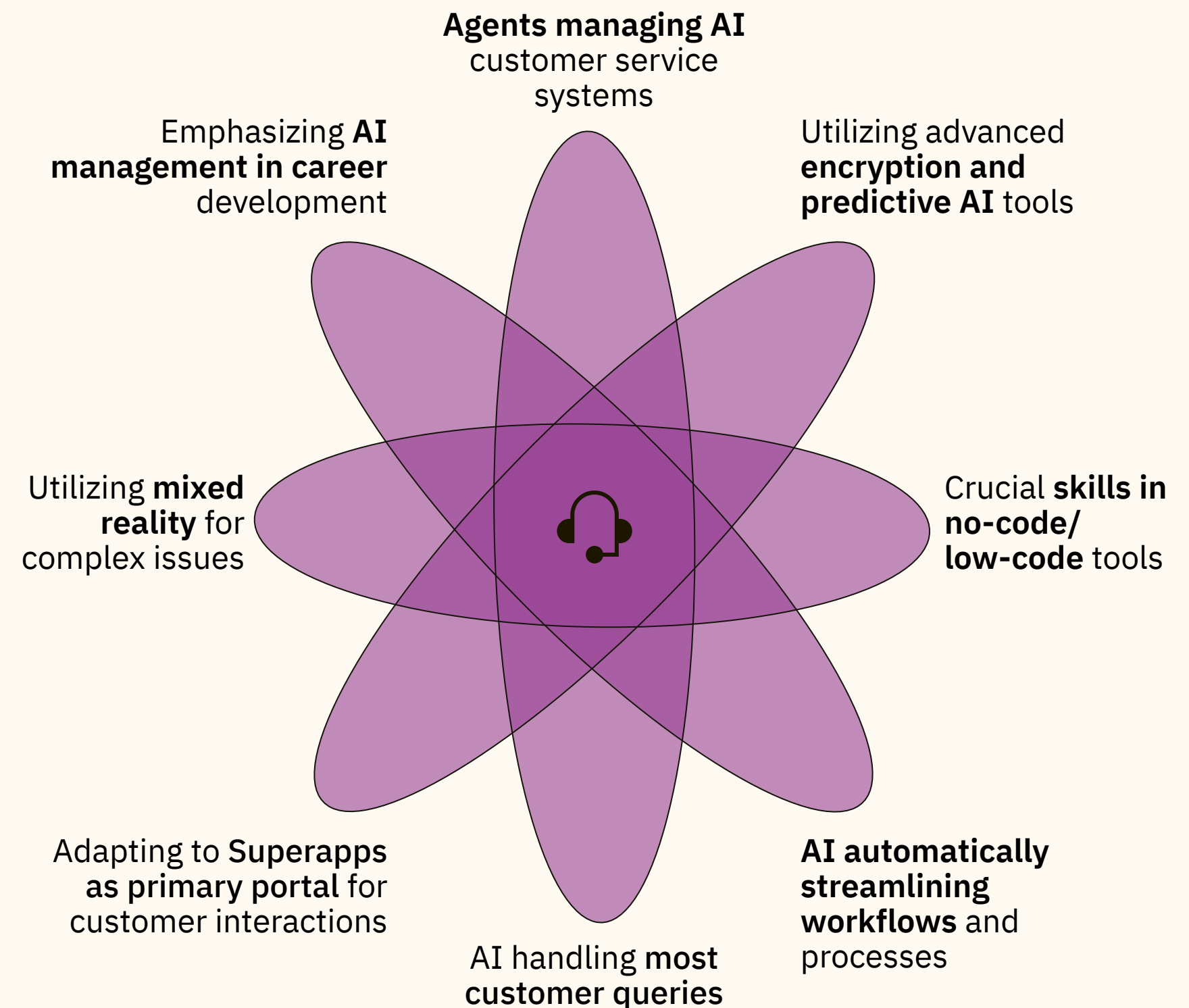
AI as driver

Deliver highly personalized service via better customer data.

Greater focus on harder skills like data, tech, security, and analysis.

AI integral to the training process: virtual coaching, soft skills training, and mental wellbeing.

Agents recruited primarily on their ability to use AI-driven customer service tools.



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