CAREER VECTORS

Personal Development

Lead Dev Together

Nov 2022

P&G

GDS

vodafone

M&S DIGITAL

MOO

monzo

Lead Dev

#STANDFORSTONEWALL

healx

MY CAREER JOURNEY & HORIZONS

- “It’s all about code”
- “It’s all about systems”
- ”It’s all about architecture and how things fit together”
- “It’s all about processes and how things get done”
- “Oh shit. It’s all about people!”
- “Hang on, it only really matters if people in healthy teams deliver tech that actually meets business needs”
- “It’s all about systems of systems!"

THERE IS NO SINGLE FLAVOUR
OF TECHNICAL LEADER …

ON THE ONE HAND THIS IS FREEING … ON THE OTHER HAND IT'S A BIT SCARY

SO HOW TO MAKE SENSE OF THINGS?

Meri Williams, ChromeRose

@Geek_Manager

1) LOOK FOR EXAMPLES
2) SPOT PATTERNS

FLAVOURS OF TECHNICAL LEADERS

- Hands-on, deep technical expert
- Tech leads, delivery projects & products of increasing complexity
- Architect type roles – working at a different level of abstraction on systems & tech
- Combo manager/leader roles – developing and enabling individuals & teams
- Organisational leaders – managers of managers (of managers…)

THIS LEADS US TO WHAT I CALL CAREER VECTORS

1. HANDS-ON IN-DEPTH TECH

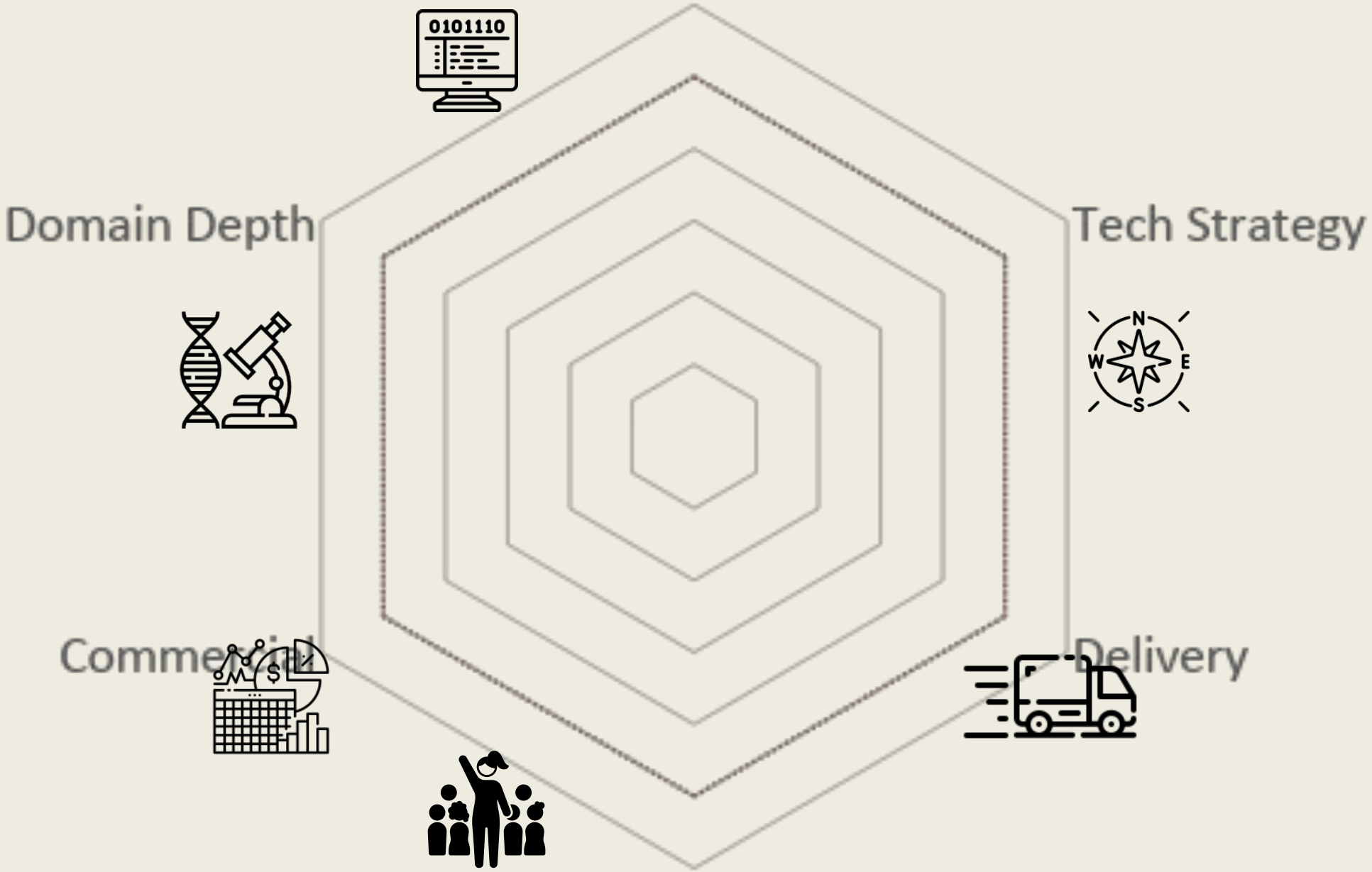
2. TECH STRATEGY

3. DELIVERY / GSD

4. ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

5. COMMERCIAL UNDERSTANDING

6. DOMAIN DEPTH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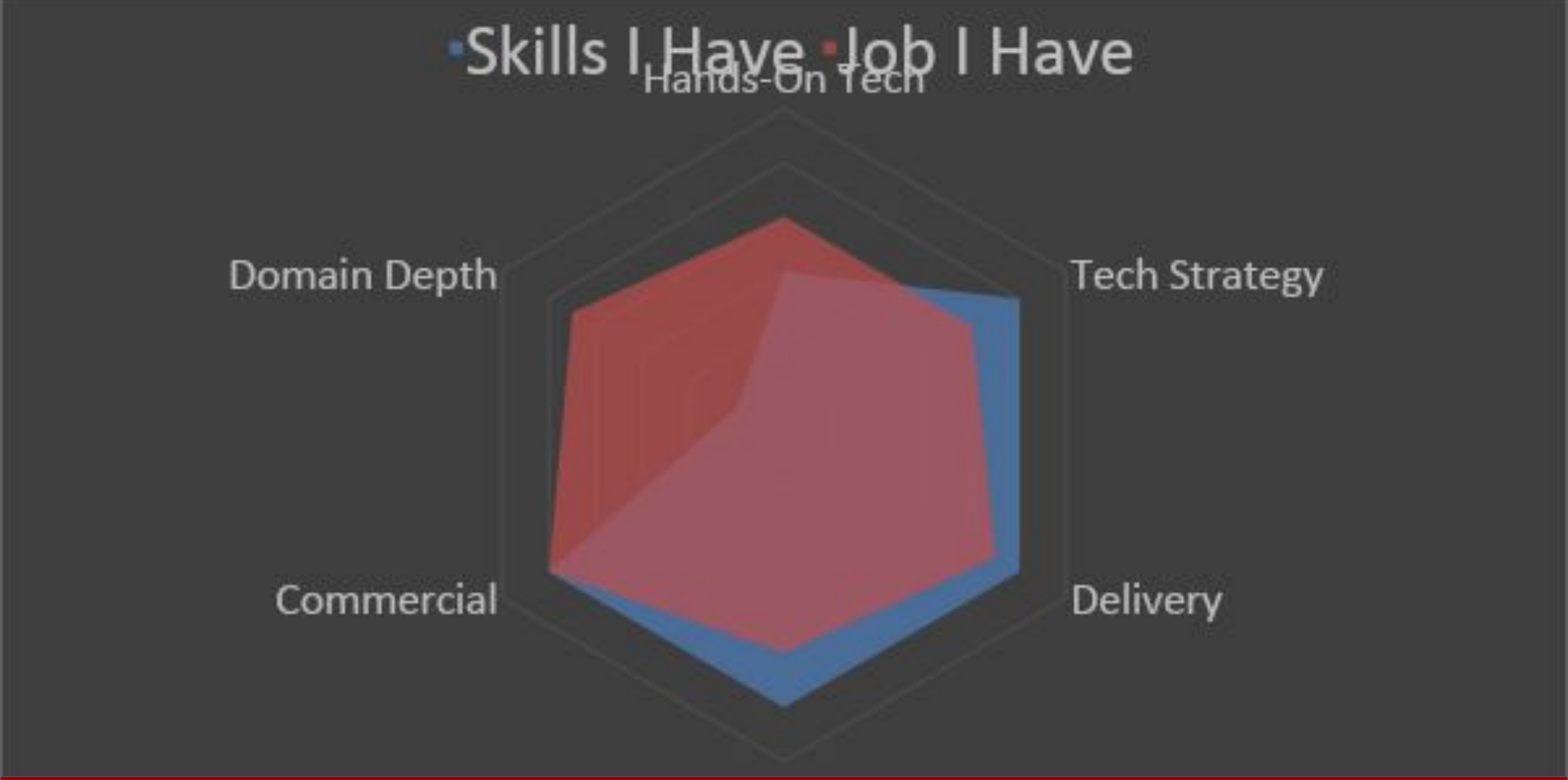
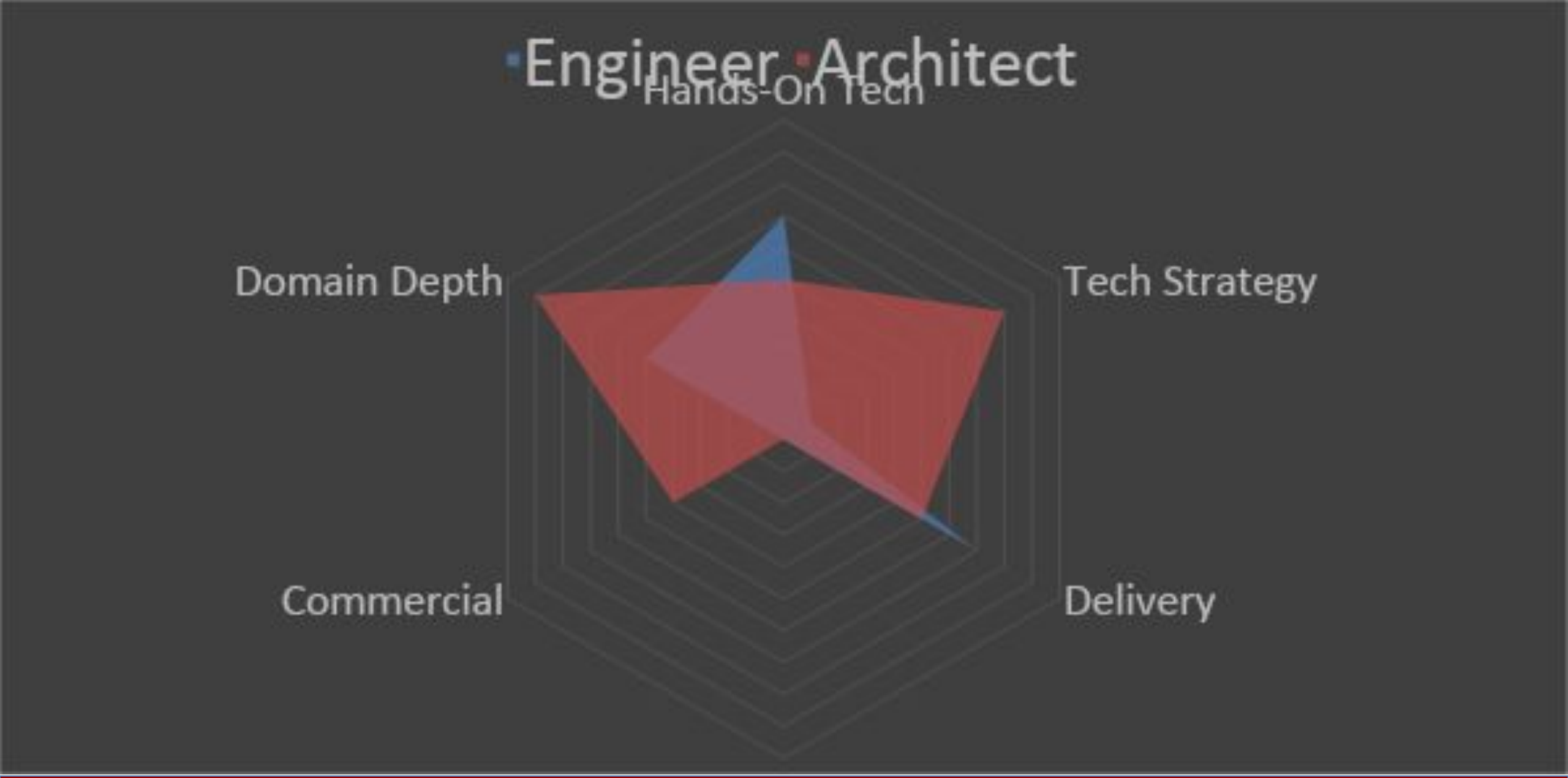

Skills I Have
Job I Have
Hands-On Tech
Tech Strategy
Delivery
Commercial
Domain Depth


Engineer
Architect
Hands-On Tech
Tech Strategy
Delivery
Commercial
Domain Depth

SDM
EM
Hands-On Tech
Tech Strategy
Delivery
Commercial
Domain Depth

MAP YOUR CURRENT SKILL & KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE STATUS

ASSESS YOUR GAPS AGAINST THE ROLE(S) YOU HAVE & WANT IN FUTURE

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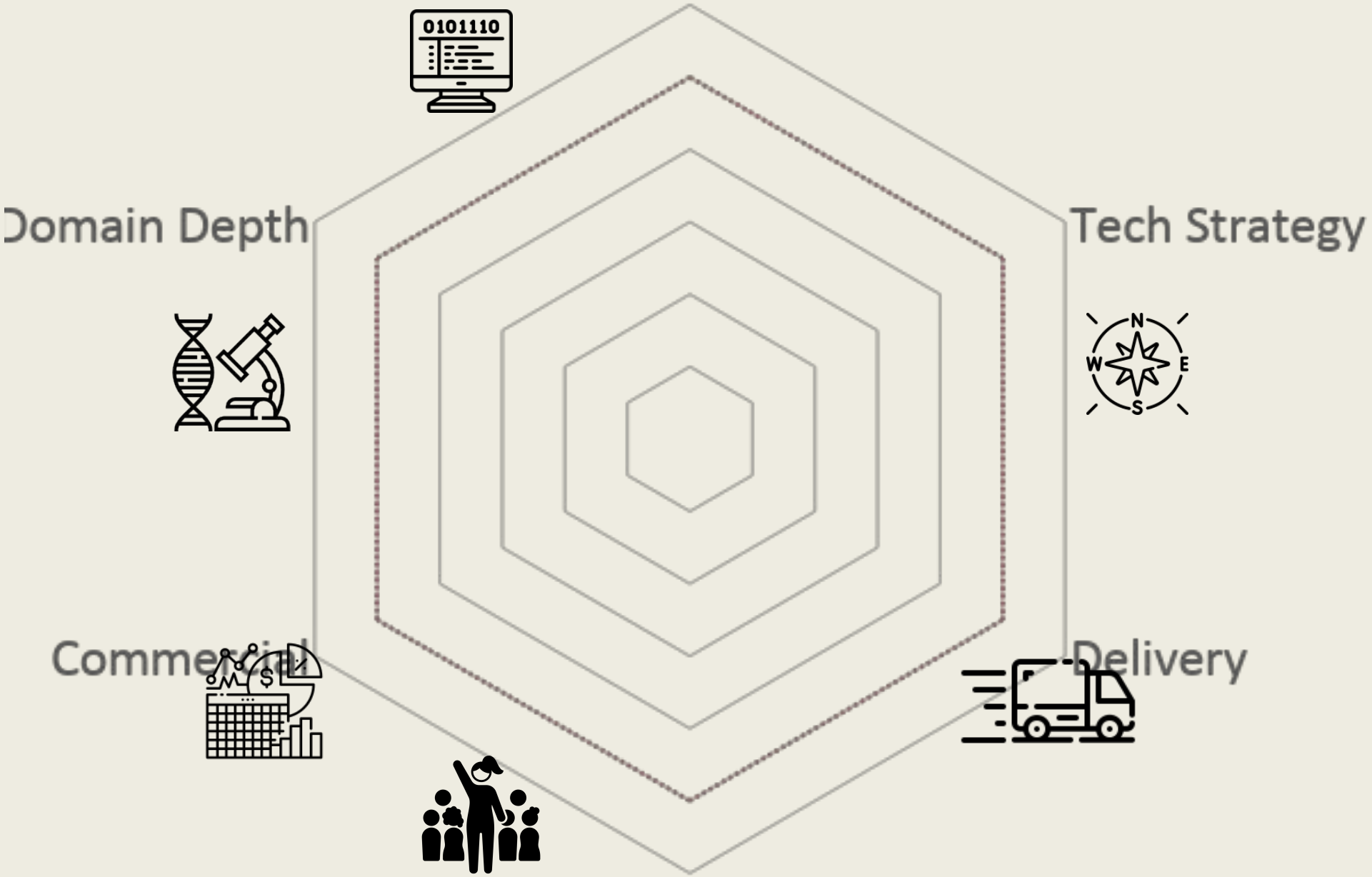
REMEMBER: THIS IS NOT POKEMON!

Meri Williams, ChromeRose

@Geek_Manager

ONLY FOCUS ON A GAP OR WEAKNESS IF IT IS A CONTROLLING WEAKNESS

[A CONTROLLING WEAKNESS IS SOMETHING YOU AREN'T GOOD AT THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO PERFORM WELL IN YOUR ROLE]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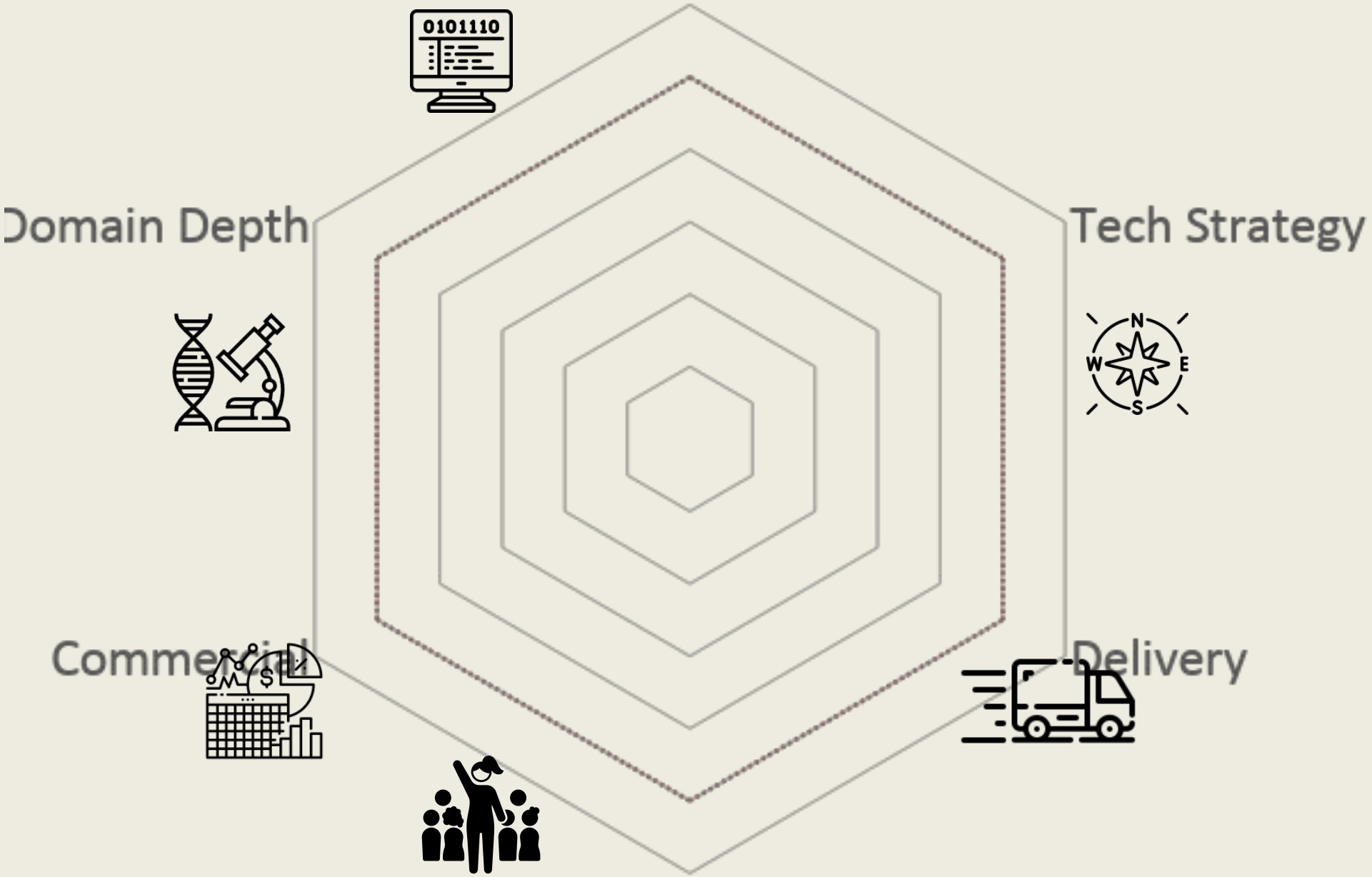
ZOOMING OUT FOR A MOMENT, THINK ABOUT WHETHER IT'S CLEAR TO EVERYONE AT YOUR ORG WHICH OF THESE VECTORS MATTER FOR WHICH ROLES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WHAT KINDS OF SHAPES DO YOU REQUIRE?

WHAT KINDS OF GROWTH DO YOU ENABLE?

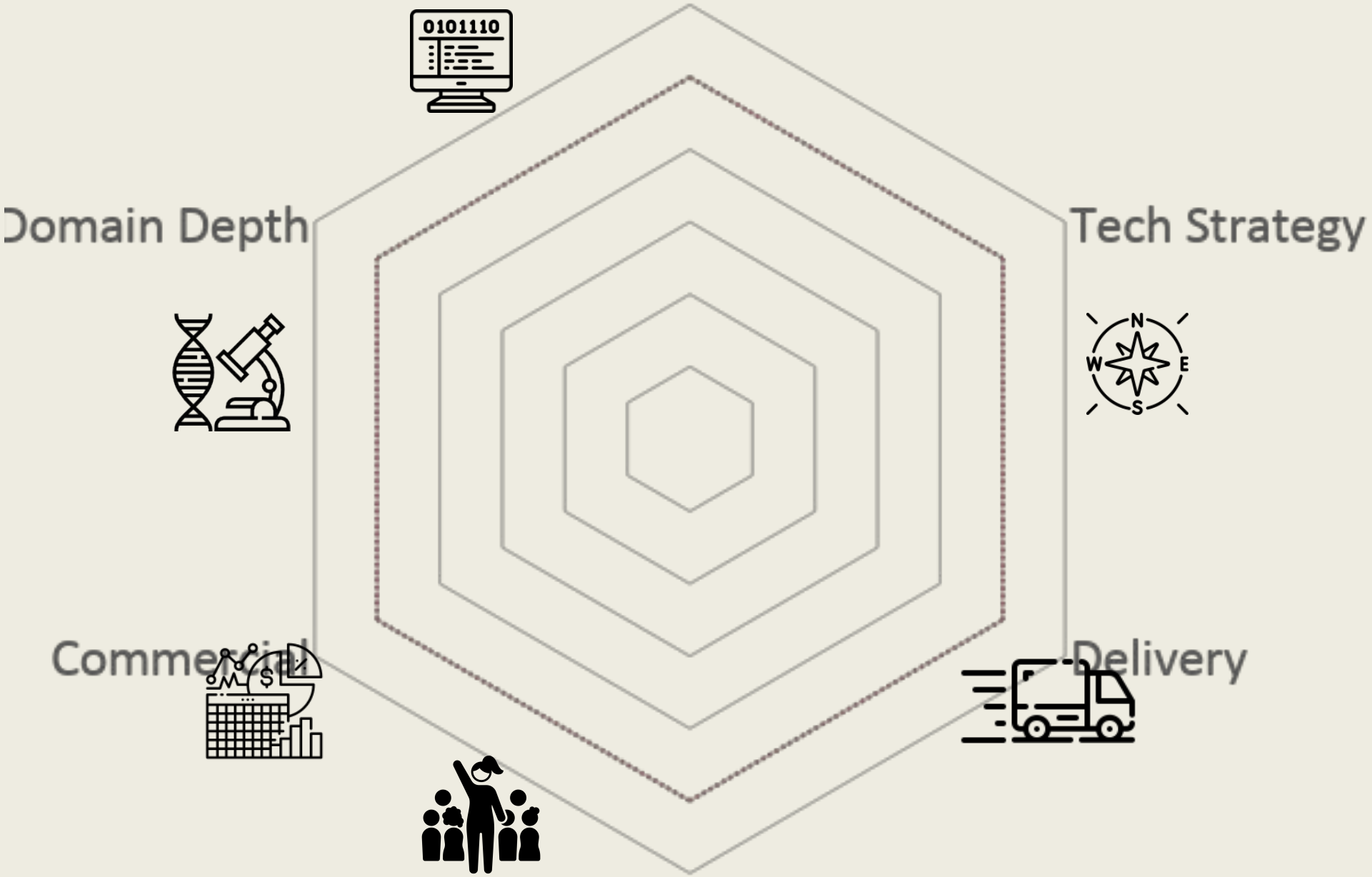
COMMON TENSIONS…

- How much are managers expected to focus on developing & enabling individuals & teams versus ensuring delivery?
- Is Tech Lead role more about technical depth or leading the team to deliver a solution? How much business understanding is needed?
- At what point (and for which roles) does budget and commercial understanding becoming essential?
- Which elements of tech strategy require in-depth hands-on expertise?
- Is it clear to everyone what the difference between architect and eg staff or principal engineer is?

DON’T TRY TO MAKE EVERYONE EQUALLY GENERALIST – YOU END UP LEVELLING PEOPLE OUT TOWARDS MEDIOCRITY.

EMBRACE DIFFERENCE!

EVERY
PERSON IS
CAPABLE OF
VIRTUOSITY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