

What the Best CX Leaders Do When They Don't Own the Journey

Shruti Ahluwalia

VP of Technology, AI & Product Experience



The Institute of
Internal Auditors

CAREER BACKGROUND



Let's Connect



/in/shrutiahluwalia

Views are my own — not affiliated with any current or former employer.

Most CX Teams Don't Have Power

You own the experience. You don't own the stuff that actually shapes it.

WHAT YOU'RE ACCOUNTABLE FOR (BUT DON'T CONTROL)



The data? IT owns the pipes.



The product roadmap? Product decides what ships.



How work actually gets done? Ops runs that.



What's allowed? Legal and compliance gate it.



The dashboards? You get to read them. Eventually.

So you influence. Or you get ignored.

WHAT THE CUSTOMER ACTUALLY EXPERIENCES



Your churn model fires. Nobody does anything about it.



A survey says "fix onboarding." It ends up in a slide deck.



NPS drops. You form a task force. It meets monthly. Nothing changes.



AI spots the broken moment. The customer still has to pick up the phone.

The problem isn't your insight. It's that nobody wired it to action.

The Experience Intelligence Map

Not a journey map on a wall. A way to see where your org creates value — and where it falls apart.

FIVE THINGS THAT HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER



Intelligence = data turned into a decision nobody can argue with. That's what turns influence into power.

What This Looks Like — With Real Tools

Here's what changes when you actually wire intelligence into the work.

WITHOUT E·I

You manually read through hundreds of support tickets trying to spot patterns.

You wait for the monthly NPS report to find out members are unhappy. By then, they've left.

Meetings happen. Decisions get made. Nobody remembers who said what. Action items disappear.

THE AI MOVE



ChatGPT / Claude

Feed in 6 months of tickets. It clusters themes, ranks by frequency and severity.



Perplexity AI

Research competitor gaps, benchmark your experience, find what members compare you to — in real time.



Copilot

Auto-records and transcribes every meeting. Pulls out action items and decisions automatically.

WITH E·I

In 20 minutes you have a prioritized list of what's actually breaking for customers.

You walk into the room with market context, not just internal scores. You're the one with answers.

Every commitment is tracked. You follow up with receipts, not memory. Nothing slips through.

You don't need a platform overhaul. You need to plug one tool into one decision.

How We're Building CX Power at The IIA

1

Rewrite the values in the member's voice

We defined 5 North Star customer values. Four were easy. The fifth started as "Deliver." We killed it.

We replaced it with "Trust" — meaning: "I get experiences worth my time and investment."

When you write the value in their voice, you stop grading your own experience. They do.

2

Build member feedback into the operating rhythm

We didn't wait for annual surveys. We started capturing member signals at every touchpoint — events, certifications, support, digital.

That feedback now shows up in team standups, not just executive quarterly reviews.

If the people doing the work never see the feedback, nothing changes.

3

Use AI to turn noise into evidence

We started using AI tools to analyze member tickets, session behavior, and engagement patterns at scale.

Instead of walking into meetings with "I think we should..." we walk in with "here's what the data says."

That's the whole power play. You go from opinions to evidence.

That's not wordsmithing. That's a transfer of power.

You stop asking for a seat at the table.

**You become the person who sees
what no one else can.**

Q & A



Shruti Ahluwalia

VP of Technology, AI & Product Experience
The Institute of Internal Auditors

/in/shrutiahluwalia

#SparksIntoSignal