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UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING: MAINTAINING A LEARNING CULTURE

To achieve market needs, business require skilled labour and this situation is unlikely to change. However, as market conditions, technologies, and organizational requirements changes, so will in-demand skills. Employee's employment has been transformed by influences such as globalization. Technology, notably artificial intelligence (AI), has the potential to further revolutionize those occupations.

Employee upskilling and reskilling prepare businesses for the changes that are occurring now. Upskilling occurs when employees improve upon existing skills and deepen their abilities and impact within their area of expertise. By expanding their knowledge, employees become better positioned for additional responsibilities and higher-level roles. Reskilling involves training employees on an entirely new set of skills to prepare them to take on a different role within the company. This typically occurs when workers' previous tasks or responsibilities become irrelevant, often due to advances in technology.

These exercises help firms to get ready to deal with fast-moving developments that may necessitate greater agility. Several factors will make upskilling and reskilling essential in coming years as businesses plan for shifts in talent needs.In today's world, upskilling and reskilling require a combination of both individual initiative and employer support.

Individual initiative:

1. **Identify skill gaps:** Individuals should analyse their present abilities and knowledge to see where they may improve. They can do this by reviewing job descriptions for roles they want to pursue or by talking to their peers or mentors in their field.

2. **Choose the right skill to develop:** Individuals should prioritise which talents to learn depending on their professional aspirations and market demand once they have discovered their skill gaps. It is critical to select talents that are in demand, provide room for advancement, and correspond to personal interests and strengths.

3. **Seeking out learning opportunity:** There are numerous opportunities to learn new skills, including online courses, workshops, conferences, and mentorship programmes. To keep informed and up to date, individuals should take advantage of these chances and seek out other resources such as books, podcasts, and industry blogs.

Employer initiative:

1. **Invest in employee training:** Employers can help their employees upskill and reskill by providing training programmes and materials.

2. **Encourage Learning Culture:** Employers can build a culture of continuous learning by encouraging employees to share their knowledge and skills with their colleagues and fostering professional development.

3. **Offer Career growth opportunity:** Employers can provide their employees with career progression chances, such as promotions or lateral movements, to allow them to learn new abilities and obtain new experiences.

Individuals can gain new skills and progress in their careers by taking the initiative and seeking out learning opportunities, with employer assistance, while firms can retain people and stay ahead of the curve.

UPSKILLING: EQUIPPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE ON NEW ROLES

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Upskilling is the process of upgrading existing skills, to improve one's job prospects, career advancement, and overall employability. In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving job market, upskilling has become an essential part of career development and a critical tool for professionals to stay relevant in their field.

In recent years, the job market has undergone significant changes due to rapid technological advancement and digital transformation. As a result, many traditional job roles are becoming necessary for professionals to adapt to these changes and prepare themselves for future career opportunities. Upskilling can take many forms, including taking courses or training programs, attending conferences or workshops, and networking with peers in the same field. Online learning platforms such as Coursera, edX, and LinkedIn learning offer a vast range of courses on technical skills, managerial skills, leadership, and communication. Many of these courses are free or low-cost, making upskilling accessible to anyone with an internet connection. One of the most significant benefits of upskilling is that it enables professionals to enhance their job performance and productivity. Employees can perform their tasks more efficiently, make better decisions, and contribute more effectively to their organizations.

This, in turn, can lead to better job satisfaction, increased job security, and potential promotions or salary increases. Moreover, upskilling can also open new career opportunities and help professionals transition to different roles or industries. For example, a software developer may choose to upskill in data analytics, enabling them to pursue a career in data science. Alternatively, a marketing professional may upskill in social media marketing, which is becoming increasingly important in today's digital landscape.

Benefits of Upskilling:

- **Improved employability:** Upskilling can make individuals more marketable and increase their chances of finding new job opportunities. It makes them more attractive to employers who are looking for candidates with diverse skill set.

- **Career advancement:** Learning new skills can help individuals advance in their careers, whether by taking on new responsibilities or transitioning to a different role or industry. Upskilling can also lead to higher salaries and better job satisfaction.

- **Increased productivity:** When employees have the necessary skills to perform their jobs effectively, they are likely to be more productive and efficient. This can lead to better business outcomes, including increased revenue and profitability.

- **Futureproofing:** As technology continues to evolve and job requirements change, upskilling can help individuals and businesses stay relevant and adapt to new challenges. By continuously learning and improving their skills, individuals, and organizations can future proof themselves against disruptive changes in the job market.

- **Personal growth:** Upskilling can be a fulfilling and rewarding experience that helps individuals achieve personal goals and aspirations. It can also provide a sense of accomplishment and boost self-confidence.

Real-life examples of companies upskilling their workforce in 2023:

AMAZON:
In September 2021, Amazon committed $1.2 billion to provide 300000 employees with access to education and skill training programs by 2025 as a part of Amazon's Upskilling 2025 pledge. Through this program, Amazon is focused on creating pathways to careers in future growing areas. Amazon continues to launch new training opportunities and expand on existing programs for employees across the U.S. Few of them are:

- **AWS Grow our own talent:** On the job training and job placement opportunities to Amazon employees and entry-level candidates with non-traditional backgrounds.

- **Surge2IT:** help entry-level IT employees across Amazon's operations network pursue careers in higher-paying technical roles through self-paced learning resources.

- **The UXDR Apprenticeship program:** combines instructor-led training and real-world experience to offer employees the opportunity to learn and develop skills in research and design.

- **Mechatronics and Robotics Apprenticeship program:** learn skills and technical knowledge to fulfil technical maintenance roles.

IBM:
IBM made a worldwide plan to provide thirty million people irrespective of ages with new skills needed for the jobs by 2030. IBM announced a roadmap with more than 170 academic and industry partnerships. The plan count on a broad combination of programs, and includes collaborations with universities, key government entities, and NGOs. In general, IBM's efforts mobilize the private sector across the globe to open and expand opportunity pathways for underrepresented and historically disadvantaged communities.

AT&T:
AT & T's future ready initiative focuses on personalized skills development paths. The initiative focuses on collaborations with online education platforms to offer employees with online learning opportunities. It includes personalized learning experiences in a career portal that helps employees plan their future and identify skills they need to learn.

MASTERCARD:
To stay ahead of competition and encourage its employees to build new skills Mastercard created a learning culture using Degreed as a platform that offers tailored learning experiences, makes career pathways, and helps employees connect to the content relevant to them. A wide variety of content is available on Degreed, including 'bite-sized' learning in the form of short articles, videos, and podcasts. This makes it easy for employees to engage with learning on the go.

TRENDS OF SKILLING, UP-SKILLING, AND RESKILLING IN HR

Compiled by
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In today's fast-paced and rapidly evolving business environment, organizations must prioritize skill development to remain competitive. This is especially the case in human resources, where the need for specialized knowledge and skill is escalating. HR professionals should therefore act to skill, upskill, and reskill themselves to maintain their skills. Skilling refers to the process of learning new talents to improve a person's set of abilities. It entails developing skills, information, and talents related to one's current position or profession. Learning new HR-related software, mastering new HR-related laws, or understanding new trends in the HR business are all examples of skilling in the context of HR.

Upskilling involves improving one's current abilities to stay up with changes in the industry or to satisfy the requirements of new jobs or responsibilities. For example, HR professionals may need to upgrade to become skilled in using new HR technologies, discover new methods for data analysis, or enhance their interpersonal and communication abilities.

Reskilling describes the process of learning new skills to change roles or industries. For HR professionals, desire to take on new tasks or broaden their career horizons, this might be a key step. For example, a human resources professional who want to advance from a generalist to a specialist position in employee relations may need to reskill to gain knowledge of employment law, conflict resolution, and other relevant topics.

Some specific areas of skilling in HR includes recruitment and selection involving locating, screening, and choosing people; employee engagement involving motivating and creating a positive work environment; gaining expertise in determining training needs; creating performance improvement programmes; compensation and benefits plans; handling employee complaints; and understanding employment laws and regulations. The areas in which HR professionals need to reskill includes basic understanding of data analytics, AI, employee experience design, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), remote work management, agile project management, learning and development programs, and change management. These skills are necessary to make data-driven decisions and automate HR processes, design, and deliver employee experience programs, create, and implement DEI policies and programs, manage remote teams, support virtual collaboration, manage Agile project management, design, and deliver learning and development programs, and manage organizational change.

Key areas for upskilling in HR include understanding data analysis and use HR metrics to measure and improve the effectiveness of HR programs and initiatives. They also need to be proficient in various HR technologies, such as HRIS, ATS, and LMS. They need to be excellent in talent management strategies, including talent acquisition, retention, and development. HR professionals need to be equipped to handle issues related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). HR professionals need to stay up to date on Employment Laws and Regulations to ensure compliance and mitigate legal risks. They also need to understand Organizational Development Principles and Techniques to help organizations meet their strategic goals and objectives. HR professionals need to be skilled in developing and implementing Employee Engagement Programs. They also need to be effective communicators to effectively convey HR policies.

Skilling, Reskilling, and Upskilling are essential for HR professionals to stay competitive and effective in their roles. Employers should support their HR teams by providing training and development opportunities, and resources to improve employee retention, productivity, and organizational performance. By continually developing their skills and knowledge, HR professionals can add value to their organizations, advance their careers, and contribute to their organizations' success.

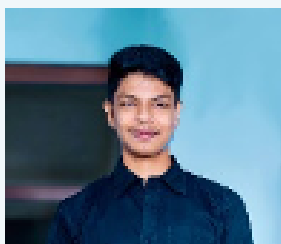# SKILLING, UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING: INDUSTRY 4.0 AND BEYOND

Compiled by
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Industry 4.0 has strongly impacted globalization by changing the labour force and expanding the access to new skills and knowledge. Employees, finance, and technology are the three major components that considerably aided to the development of the past three industrial revolutions. Now, it is time to look at the talent required to realize the vision of Industry 4.0 and beyond.

World Economic Forum (WEF) estimates that, by 2025, 50% of all employees will need to reskill themselves due to adoption of new technology. Five years from now, over two-thirds of skills that are considered vital in today's job requirements will be replaced. One third of the needed skills in 2025 will consist of technology competencies. The global supply chain, for example, has already experienced a great deal of change in the past five years. Online shopping, e-commerce, automated warehouse operations, and digitized seaport shipping information exchange are a few examples.

Disruptive technologies are opening new possibilities for society, providing innovative technology applications, novel materials, and processes to create products and services that until recently were unimaginable. As a result, those working in the manufacturing and service sectors will need new skills. Mobile internet, cloud technology, and artificial intelligence are already impacting how we work. Before COVID-19, the rise of automation and new technologies transformed the world of work, resulting in an urgent need for large-scale upskilling and reskilling. Post pandemic, this has become even more critical. By giving all people opportunities to develop the skills and be prepared for future workplace, organisations could create more inclusive and sustainable economies.

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IMPLEMENTING A RESKILLING OR UPSKILLING PLAN

The rapidly rising automation has influenced numerous organizations across different industries. Employees are most fearful of losing their jobs. This makes job security their utmost priority. Businesses also fear that their employees don't have the much-required skills needed to support their business. This makes it important for most organizations to take care of their employee's professional development. To combat this challenge, employers must provide opportunities for upskilling and reskilling. This can be done through:

- **Personalized Training Approach:**
Personalized training makes employees feel valued. Programs that focus on an individual will help them progress at a much faster rate compared to group training. A personalized learning program can only be productive by understanding the knowledge gaps and expertise of every individual.

- **Mentorship Programs:**

Mentorship programs are rapidly increasing. Connecting promising team members with experienced employees will help them grow much needed professional skills. Mentorship programs are most useful when an individual is climbing the corporate ladder and aspires to take a senior position. Mentees feel encouraged when the mentors guide them into a higher position.

- **Simulations and Real-world Case Studies:**

Real-world case studies and simulation will allow people to identify and apply knowledge promptly. In training, generic content will not engage learners. It will only be relevant if it applies to their job. Case studies should only be selected for training depending on how much it relates to the day-to-day operation of the employee's role.

- **Introduce Bite-size or Micro-learning:**

Employees working in packed schedules and workloads cannot give much time to training. On the other hand, microlearning or bite-size learning, which contains short lessons of about 3 to 5 minutes is better and quicker learning approach.

·   Secondary Online Learning Program.

A secondary online learning program can provide additional resources to the employees which can be utilized in their free time. These programs can help organisations to create future leaders with the required knowledge for their professional growth. They can learn numerous skills ranging from time management, work ethic, to communication skills.

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