



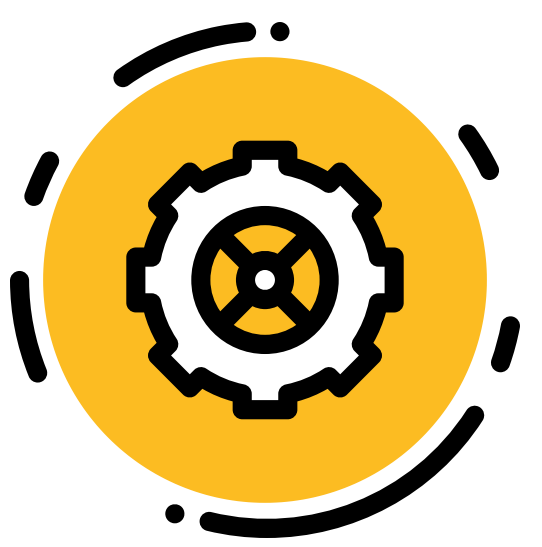
NASSCOM Reskilling Series

Tech Mahindra's Journey

INTRODUCTION

No force can stop India's labour force from driving country's economic transformation, if it has the right set of skills to thrive in this technological revolution. We have already come a long way in reshaping our workforce. The country boasts a digitally skilled employee base that accounts for approximately 75% of the global digital talent*. A large share of this success can be attributed to our IT industry, which has been actively working on re-engineering its 3.9 million-strong human resource base to meet the demands of a fast-transforming marketplace.

India's top IT firms that have a collective employee base of more than a million people, have already reskilled around half of them in 2018, in areas such as; cloud-based, analytics and agile software development**. Through this reskilling series, NASSCOM explores how Tech M, one of India's leading IT firms, is driving workforce reskilling in the digitally transforming world.



How Tech M navigates Digital Transformation?

For Tech M, the key to successful digital transformation lies in, 'disrupting one's own business, before others do'. This calls for being a fast adopter of best-in-class technology and building one's own unique digital capabilities, which starts with employees having adequate knowledge of the relevant digital technologies.

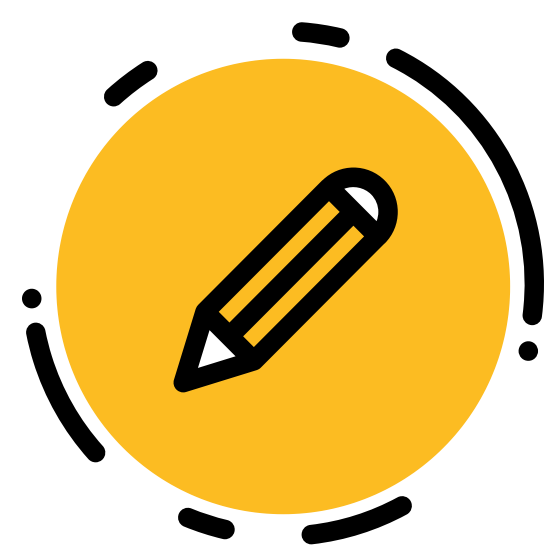
At Tech M, the digital technologies that are in focus are; Robotic Process Automation, AR/VR, Full-Stack, Analytics, Blockchain, Networks of Future and Cloud. There is a recognition of something that is becoming a popular refrain in reskilling literature, that one-time training won't have a lasting impact. Tech M is working

opportunities for its employees. The good news is that employees today are willing to take their training very seriously, provided they have access to proper tools and support.

Tech M is also training ahead of the curve for technologies like Blockchain that are currently not in high demand. It has a Blockchain centre of excellence

and has also launched the Blockchain Geek, wherein the target is to enable its employees, to develop things using Blockchain.

Tech M is also building an internal New Age Delivery platform that is built around key levers like – Automation & AI, Adoption of Agile & Digital, Capability As A Service, Upskilling As a Service etc which will also leverage the FutureSkills platform.

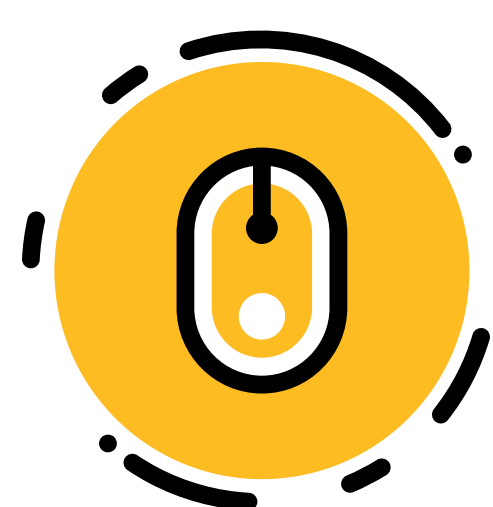


Maximizing own people before looking outside

For Tech M, looking towards outside talent is just one (and small) part of the strategy to meet the talent demand in new tech; working creatively towards maximizing the potential of every employee is the major one. The larger strategy is to reskill every associate in the organization and make them 'Digital Savvy'. This unique Tech M term includes preparing them for future roles, meeting domain specific requirements and equipping them with technology specific skills.

Tech M is aligning its job roles to those defined by NASSCOM that are available on the NASSCOM FutureSkills portal.

Although the targets are business-driven, Tech M aims to make at least 70% of its IT people future-role ready. This requires hands-on experience, milestone based assessments and certifications in line with the business requirement of the organization.










Key Digital Futureskilling initiatives at Tech M

Unlike previous reskilling drives, where Tech M had enough time for designing the content and conducting train the trainer programs, the nature of reskilling has totally changed now. Earlier, mostly a factory model approach was followed, wherein big training programs were planned at large scale and covered many people. However now, in light of exponentially increasing scope of emerging technologies, the time available for developing and delivering the training is much less. The scale, speed and the learning experience the trainings need to create, have advanced significantly.

For instance, participants now prefer, anywhere-anytime type of training. Also, the focus has now shifted, from creating content to curating it, and ensuring that the right people have access to content relevant for them. As a result, Tech M is exploring multiple solutions to make it happen. One example is the digital capability index that helps determine, where the individual is today, how they can be upskilled to bridge the gap and make them role-ready and thus what content would suit their learning needs.

Digital Learning needs are divided into 2 broad categories, one, at a more essential level, and two, that requires niche skills. The table below captures the key digital reskilling initiatives at Tech M.

	Digital 1o1	Digital 2o1	Digital 3o1	Digital 4o1
Initiatives 				
Target 	Covers majority of the associates in the organization	Mandatory for every IT person at the entry level The target is to ensure that 90-95% of the people complete their training in a year (also called as the 'training associate reach').	More targeted trainings, with longer duration and higher investment in terms of trainings and certifications	Require niche skills Absolutely business driven (project demands and business demands) Requires employees to step out of their billable roles for sometime during the day to complete the training/ assignments
Tools Employed 	E-learning and self-paced; hosted on the LMS	E-learning, WebEx recordings, Tech M's mytube channel.		Was earlier, entirely in a classroom/faculty mode. Now it has been converted into blended (about 6 days are faculty led/face to face sessions and 70% is either virtual sessions or self-learning sessions) Blended supports query resolution.

RIDE and C2D (Competence to Deployment) programs: Tech M's RIDE and C2D programs were developed for nurturing in-house talent to meet the demand in new tech. In RIDE, the entire learning takes place in the self-learning mode.

The FutureSkills platform has been deployed for various internal skilling initiatives, because of the availability of up to date content, its ability to capture industry's overall view on the emerging technologies in demand and the social learning aspect that includes features like, Gamification, live-stream, ask me anything and follow channels/follow each other.



Measuring learning

Although, there is a guideline that every employee should complete a minimum 40 hours of training, Tech M is seriously thinking of doing away with that, as number of hours have no meaning, given the varied sources of learning within and outside office. Deployment is one of the key parameters to determine if the learning has been successful. Other guiding parameters are, Tech M's own assessment, 'Quest' and external certifications. In this way, Tech M seems to be following a trend seen in many other companies that have embarked upon their Digital Talent Transformation journeys.

Words of Wisdom

The need to adapt and change at a rapid pace means that there will be missteps. However, one needs to learn from them quickly. Tech M talked about two major learnings, when reskilling on the emerging technologies. These are:

- **Align training with business strategy and needs:** It might be tempting to go for the next shiny thing and start your training batch right away, in an eagerness to meet the demand for skilled talent in new tech. However, without a proper planning, there is a risk of reskilled employees not being able to find the appropriate deployable opportunities. Thus, it is recommended to align training with the business needs and agenda of the resourcing team. This will help generate better outcomes, such as, reducing the resource acquiring cost and unproductive external hiring.
- **Select the right participants for training program:** Entry criteria plays a very important role and needs to be stringent, which includes, assessing training needs and capabilities, with respect to tech skills and attitude and behavioral analysis with respect to soft skills. This will enable a higher deployment rate. For instance, before the associate comes on bench at Tech M, their capability and training needs are assessed. This helps to plan the training, so that they can be immediately assigned to a project, thus reducing the number of bench days.

Conclusion

A successful case-example can be drawn from Tech M's digital transformation journey. The important ingredients are; well-defined metrics, tangible benchmarks and empowering employees by creating the right type of ecosystem for them to learn. This comprises, choosing the appropriate content, assessment, partners and certifications and evaluating practice platforms.

References:

* NASSCOM Strategic Review 2018: Amplify Digital (2018)

** https://indiaapprenticeshipforum.org/re-skilling-the-workforce-why-it-is-necessary-and-how-it-can-be-done/?utm_source=hrkatha&utm_medium=post&utm_content=reskilling_the_workforce



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