

The Half-Life of Skills: Leading When Today's Expertise is Tomorrow's Obsolete

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"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn" — Alvin Toffler

What is the shelf-life of your expertise?

Quick Poll:

How long do technical skills remain relevant today?

- ☐ Less than 2 years
- ☐ 2 to 3 years
- ☐ More than 3 years

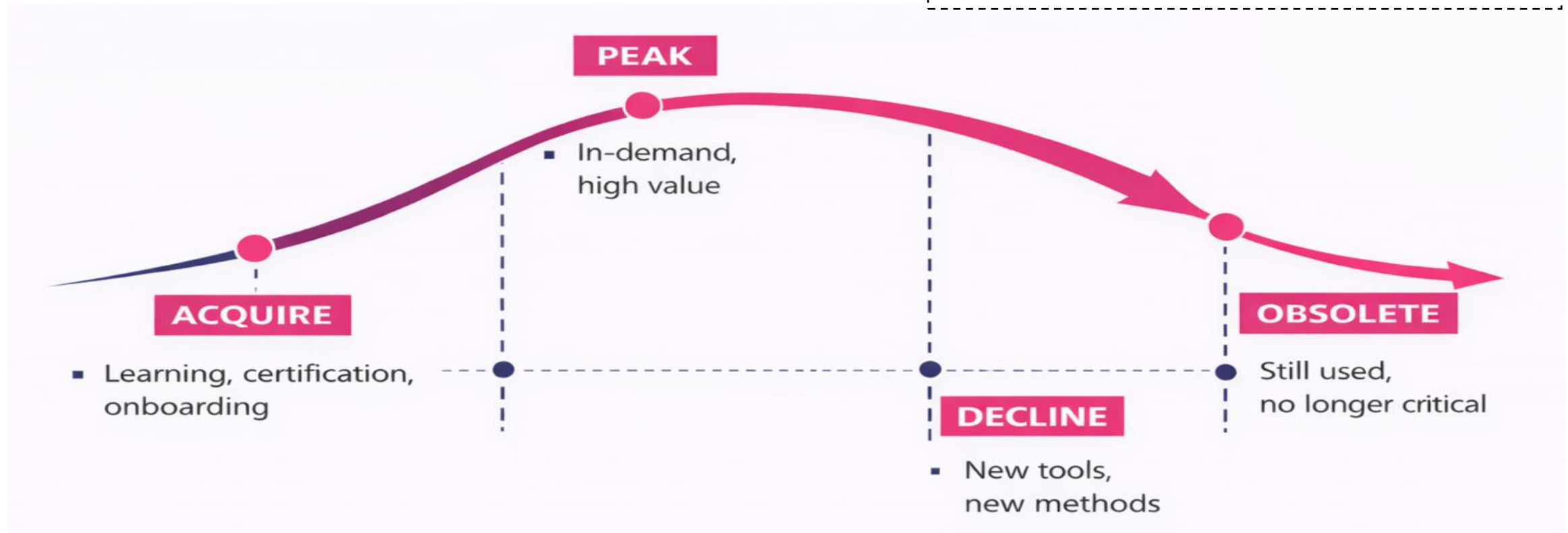


The New Reality: From Peak to Obsolete

Back in **80-90's**, Skill Lifecycle lasted ~**30 years**

In **early 2000's**, Skill Lifecycle lasted ~**10-15 years**

Today, Skill Lifecycle lasts ~**3 years**



The entire skill lifecycle now takes just 2-3 years!!

Numbers Don't Lie: The Global Skill Gap Crisis

50% of skills
will change in **5 years**

60% of the workforce
must be retrained

48% face critical
capability gaps

Deloitte.

↑ **69M** new jobs
↓ **83M** jobs lost to
automation

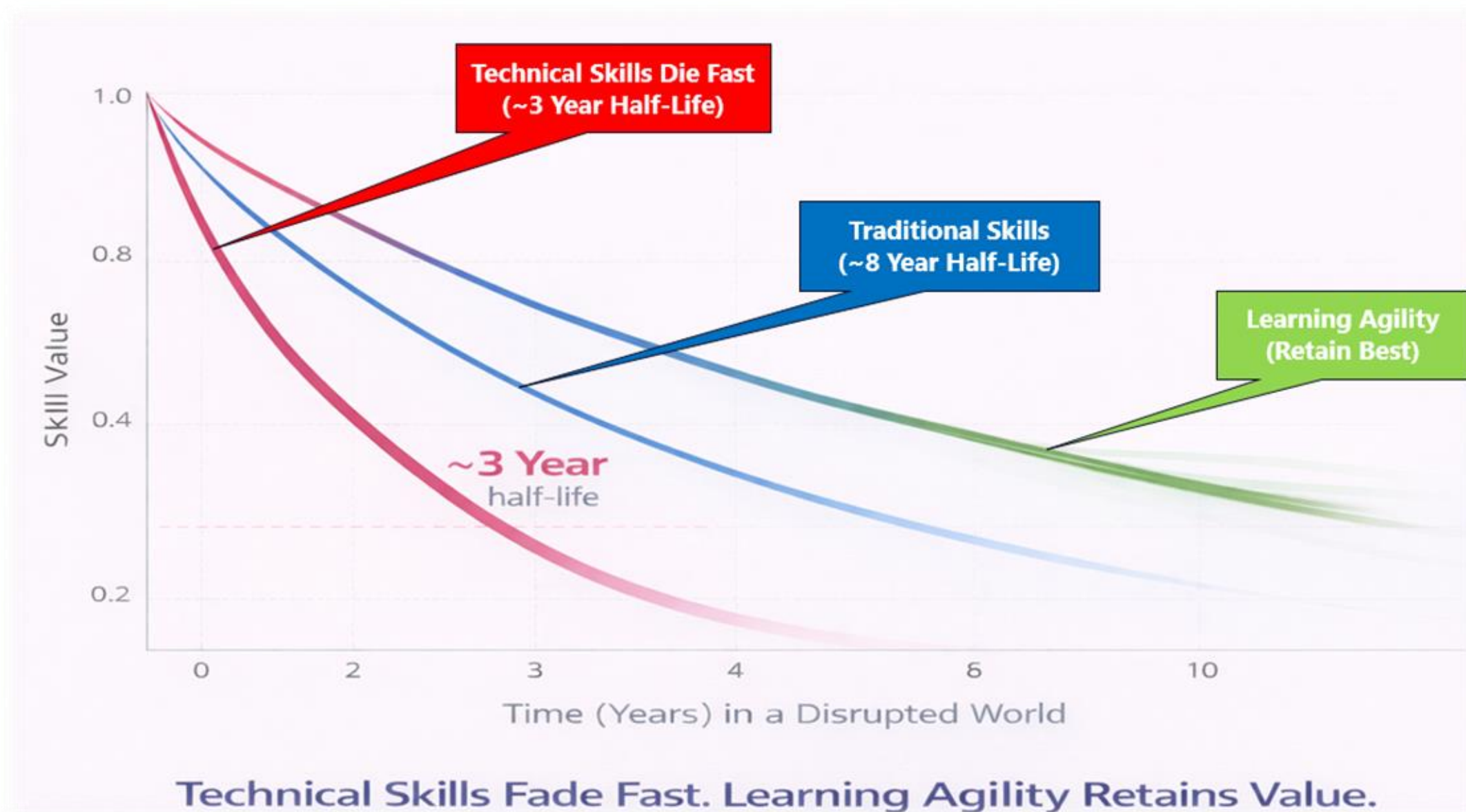
WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

Deloitte

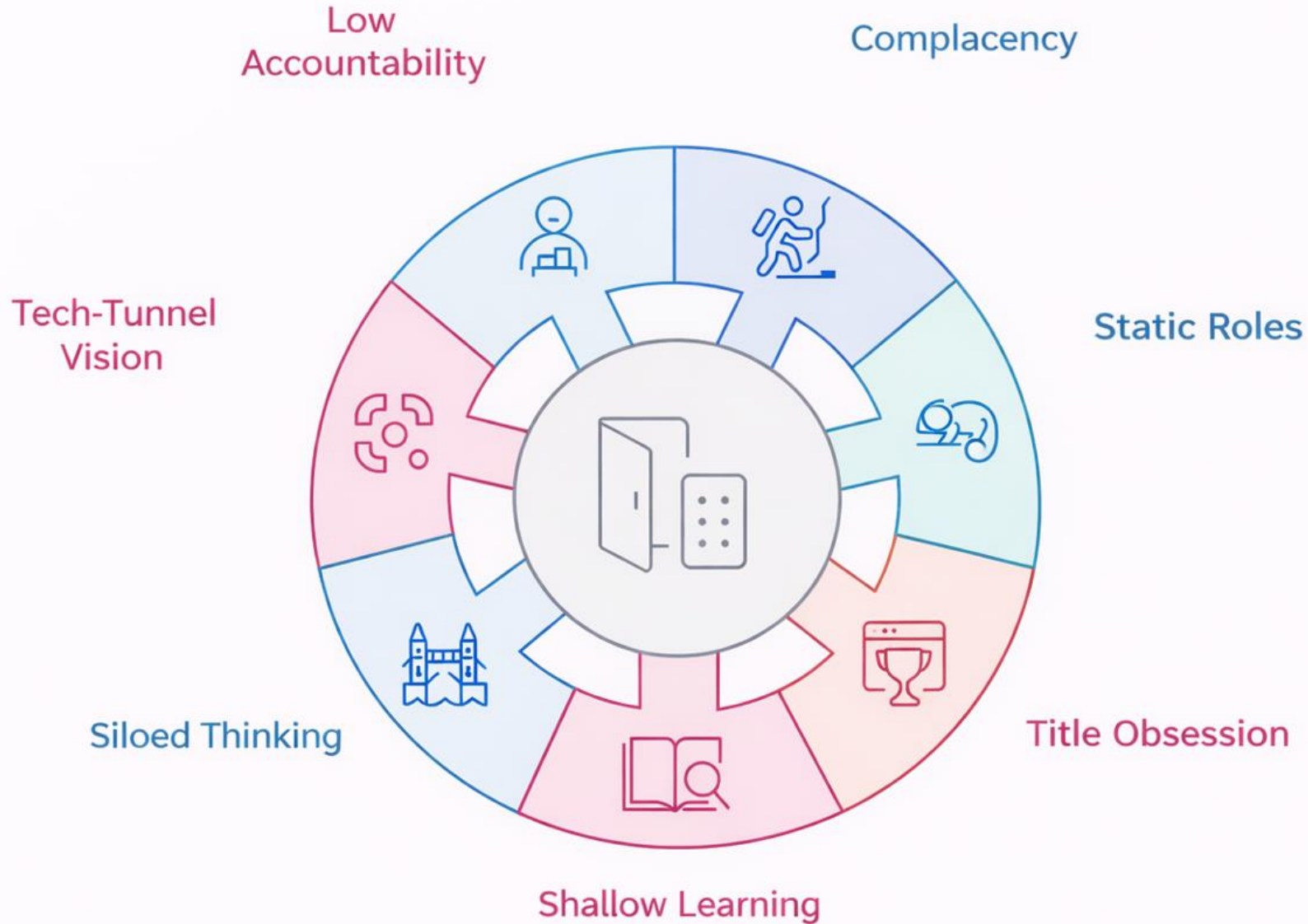


This is not a talent shortage, it's a capability decay problem.

The Skill Decline Curve: Faster, Steeper, Unforgiving



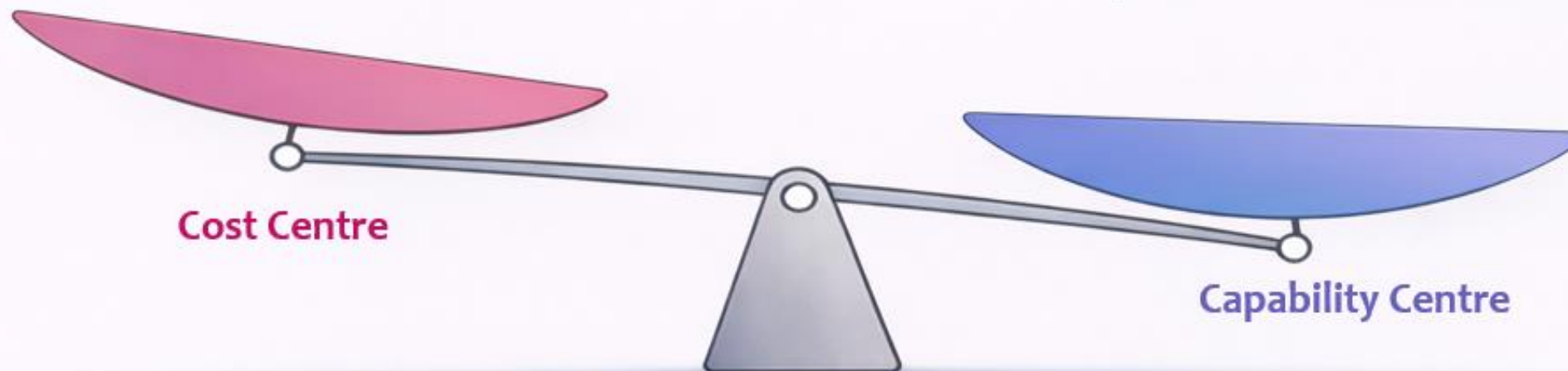
The 7 Blind Spots Holding GCC Talent Back



The GCC Mirage vs. The GCC Mission

-  Headcount Focus
-  Short-term Wins
-  Illusion of Done

-  Outcome Focus
-  Long-term Value
-  Continuous Growth



Elevate from **Cost Centre** to **Capability Centre**

India's Healthcare GCCs at an Inflection Point

1990s	Early 2000s	Late 2000s	2010–2015	2016–2018	2018–2020	2021–2023	2024 and beyond
GCC 1.0 – Initial Setup	GCC 2.0 – Disparate Capabilities	GCC 3.0 – Multi-Capability Expansion	GCC 4.0 – Integrated GCCs	GCC 5.0 – Digital Transformation	GCC 6.0 – Innovation Hubs	GCC 7.0 – Digital Twin & Global Integration	GCC 8.0 – Next-Gen GCCs
Cost arbitrage, process standardization	Shared services	Core business and platform capabilities	Business + technology integration	Cloud, analytics, mobility	Innovation labs, R&D enablement, ecosystem partnerships	Replicated capabilities leadership and PhD talent	Ecosystem-led, AI-first
Early pharma SSCs	 Bayer		 AstraZeneca (GT Chennai), Seamless	 Medtronic	 Lilly Elevance Health	 SANOFI	 MSD

Healthcare GCCs in India have evolved from cost and process arbitrage to AI-driven, globally integrated healthcare ecosystems.

Reference: Healthcare-Lifesciences-Industry-Trends-and-GCC-Landscape-in-India-2025.pdf

APAC's Moment: The World's New Healthcare Engine



APAC Clinical Trials Market by 2033



14–16%
CAGR

APAC GCC Market Growth



APAC is not catching up. **APAC** is leading global healthcare.

The Global Skill Recession Is Here

Role Expectations



Current Skills

Individuals



Shorter relevance windows

Teams



Delivery without depth

Organizations



Silent loss of competitiveness

Headcount is no longer a proxy for capability.

The Cost of Standing Still



Your Advantage Is Expiring

- Your best expertise is depreciating
- Success is becoming a bottleneck



Hiring Is Not Transformation

- Capacity $\neq$ Capability
- Without learning velocity, experts become risk



Inaction Compounds

- Execution slows. Costs rise.
- Activity increases. Value falls.
- Change gets harder every year.

Three Frontlines: Talent, Leadership, Organization

Capability gap is the result of unsynchronized change.

TALENT



TALENT

- Skills expire faster than roles
- Reskilling is continuous



LEADERSHIP



LEADERSHIP

- Hiring $\neq$ capability
- Build, don't just buy



ORGANIZATION



ORGANIZATION

- Learning is episodic
- Structures lag change



How the World is Fighting Skill Decay



AT&T

The best companies don't fight skill decay reactively - they invest in learning as strategy.

Invested \$1B to reskill employees into AI, cyber, cloud (Year 2018)

Source: Harvard Media & Aspen Institute



Allocates 20% of employee time for personal learning (Year 2000)

Source: Innovation articles & policy retrospectives



Committed \$700M for employee upskilling. (Year 2019)

Source: Amazon Report & industry outlets

The New DNA: Resilience + Reinvention

Static Skills

Resilience + Reinvention

Success is no longer fuelled by what you know.
It's how you adapt, unlearn, and evolve.

Adaptability • Curiosity • Courage

What Survives When Skills Don't

The Meta Skills That Matter

When tools expire, what remains is how you think, adapt, and lead.



RISE: The Architecture of Continuous Reinvention



References

Key Sources

- Inductus GCC- 2024 GCC Annual Report
- ANSR - Healthcare & Lifesciences Industry Trends and GCC Landscape in India 2025
- PWC - Catalysing value creation in Indian global capability centres



Thank You

for being part of the conversation.

Now take it forward in your teams,
your choices, your mindset!!

