

# BACK TO THE FUTURE

□ Edu-Tech, automation and digitisation to be more important: NIIT Prez

□ India will require 1 mn trained digi professionals by 2020

□ Digital transformation to create more jobs

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Chennai, Apr 29:

The world on the whole is moving towards technology, digitisation and automation. Education technology is also on the rise and it slowly is shaping the education space in India. *News Today* caught up with NIIT, global retail business, president, Prakash Menon to know how the industry is and what are the skills that are much needed to survive in the field of IT. He said that technology is becoming critical to making quality education and training available to the masses across India. 'In India, technology can be a potent force multiplier that can dramatically increase the impact of other scarce resources. The tech fields also need a lot of manpower which needed to be created', he said. Excerpts.



Prakash Menon

**There is a huge fear among people that technology will take over their jobs. Is it true?**

Experts like Martha Lane Fox, the face behind UK's digital transformation, believes that in UK itself more than 16 million people lack the basic digital skills to fully benefit from the internet and this includes the technology savvy millennials. The debate about the future of humans in the automated world is gathering worrying proportions. Economists and entrepreneurs are raising global concerns about the low volumes of work for humans in the future. Experts predict that far higher levels of artificial intelligence and development of distributed autonomous corporations that will be able to carry out set objectives autonomously, without any direct human supervision. The picture of a job-deficit future is becoming a reality with human subservience to AI going north. Radical transformation of the education system along with providing skills that match the algorithms would be the immediate steps to tackle these growing concerns of inequality.

**How will these tech skills help?**

Investment in technology is not the only solution and answer to our woes as we need to support the tech growth with investment in skills and knowledge to prepare for the future. Digital transformation has the potential to create a significant number of jobs with world Economic Forum estimates amounting to nearly six million jobs in just the electricity and logistics industries by 2025. The demand for new multidisciplinary digital skills is mounting along with the need for rapid reskilling and up-skilling of its present workforce. New age skills of the upcoming segments including cloud computing, extensive and growing use of social media, artificial intelligence etc. have become the need of the hour.

**How does technology help education now and what will be the future of it?**

India is touted as the next superpower, finally breaking the age old shackles of being a developing nation. However, if the country really wants to be a part of the elite group of developed world economies, its brunt is to be borne by its human capital. It is the students of today who will develop into the human capital of the future. This makes it imperative to transform education from the very beginning K-12. As a result, education technology is slowly spreading its wings in the country. We think technology can be used to provide rich media content and accessibility thereby making the teaching and learning process fun and interactive. Every emerging trend is met with challenges and edtech is no different. The need of the hour is to develop e-learning solutions. A machine based learning might drive lesson retention, but educators' experiences are a necessary.

**Automation and digitisation are the future. How are they going to help?**

Slowly but steadily the world around us has changed in the last couple of years thanks to digital innovations. It has not left the business world untouched. Many companies see it as a competitive opportunity and acknowledge that keeping pace with digital transformation is the only way ahead. 27 per cent senior executives rate digital transformation as now being a matter of survival.

**Tell us about hacking. Is it legal?**

In general computer parlance, we call them white hats, black hats and grey hats. White hat professionals hack to check their own security systems to make it more hack-proof. In most cases, they are part of the same organisation whereas black hat hackers hack to take control over the system for personal gains. They can destroy, steal or even prevent authorized users from accessing the system. They do this by finding loopholes and weaknesses in the system. Hacking can be ethical and legal. An ethical hacker is someone with spotless reputation employed by an organization to try to penetrate networks or computer systems in the same way as a hacker.

