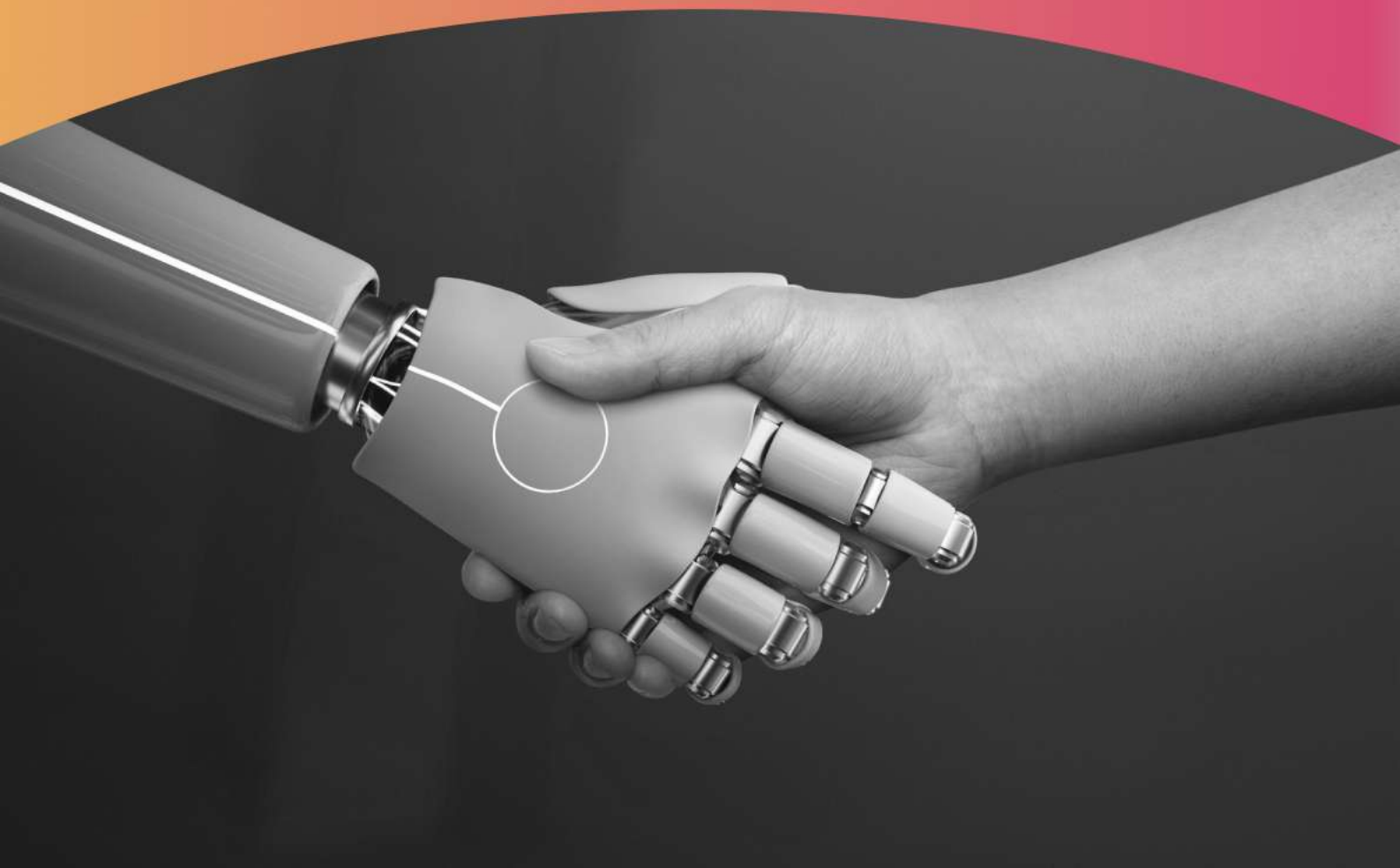
LOVELY HUMANS
by GLEAC

What doesn't replace you, makes you human



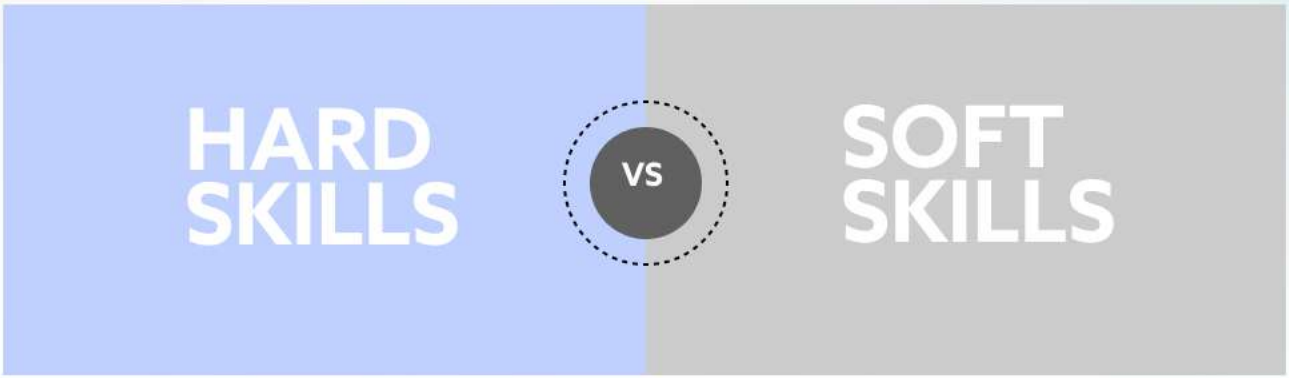
In a time where the world is rapidly digitising, what really sets us apart from the machines? What do we stand to offer the world of work?

GLEAC has been founded on the notion that what makes us human - our inherent talent as well as our lived experience, give us a unique signature that is incapable of being replicated. To a world that relies on technology more heavily than ever, GLEAC offers people an opportunity to discover and build their own humanness through self learning and a community of like minded people. GLEAC is a human skills development app based platform that supports corporate organisations as well as individuals to prepare themselves for the future of work.

What we couldn't stop thinking about - Our initial obsession

When we began, one of the first problem statements we attempted to tackle was - **"Despite more career options, more freely available information and resources, why are people finding it so hard to succeed in the workplace?"** What we found, and tried to solve for, was a gap in the market that was just beginning to be recognized - the significance of soft skills to the success of individuals.

HARD & SOFT SKILLS: MOVING FROM BINARY TO A SPECTRUM.



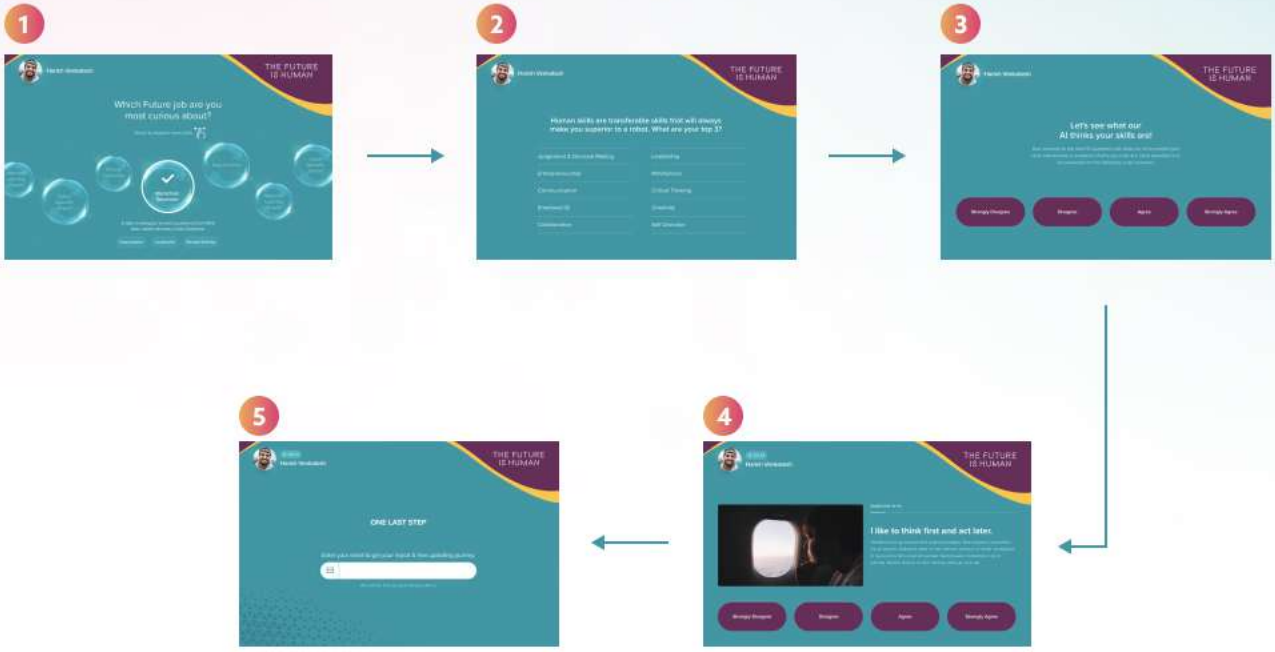
The binary of hard and soft skills is stark and has been well established, with soft skills becoming the highly valued end of the spectrum in the last few decades. Hard skills refer to technical, subject specific skills that may be easily measured through practical tests, passed on through knowledge transfer and produce visible, tangible results while also being highly contingent upon context. Soft skills, on the other hand, are broader in scope and refer to an individual's ability to interact with people and ecosystems in dynamic, action-oriented, novel ways. Soft skills are harder to transfer and measure, while also being less visible than hard skills. Transferability, thus, emerges as an important factor to define the practical usability of skills that an individual can apply across sectors and industries. Hence, a new taxonomy of skills now places emphasis on 'transferable skills', placing them somewhere on the spectrum between hard and soft skills, closer yet to the latter. Transferable skills are skills that can be used to act efficiently in different real-life situations. They can be technical and non-technical. The significance of this category of skills in a dynamically changing environment cannot be overemphasised. While slow on the uptake, they are steadily being incorporated into the pedagogy of schools as well as the Learning & Development modules of global workplaces.

We set about creating a product that would leverage artificial intelligence, smart data analytics, and behavioural science principles, to develop a patent-pending methodology that benchmarked users on a set of predetermined digital and soft skills. These skills were then measured and reported in real time based on the user's engagement with the platform. GLEAC began by developing learning modules under ten research-based 21st century skills which were highlighted under various 21st century skills frameworks such as P21 and ATC21S. These were: Collaboration, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Self Direction, Judgement & Decision Making, Communication, Mindfulness and Emotional IQ.

These are further categorised into components of each of these skills - finer skills relevant to industries today. With new findings, GLEAC is constantly updating its repository of learning modules to incorporate new elements of major skill categories and currently provides over 350 lessons meant to develop your soft skills.

In doing so, GLEAC attempted to plug a critical gap in the job market - a distinct absence of reliable modules to develop soft skills, the science backed methods of ensuring use and engagement to systematically build these skills, and a user-friendly reporting mechanism that could be used by employers and employees alike to determine the best skill-job-human fit.

Our trust with the implementation and adoption of this methodology was rewarding, and insightful. For one, we realised how hard the mapping of this skill-job-human fit actually is. To this end, in 2022, we undertook the mapping of 10 core skills against 7 job categories, a holistic mapping of the 21st century skills required for the jobs of today. The importance of this exercise was understood specifically during our experience as the official partners of the Future is Human Pavillion at Dubai Expo 2020. Being the second most visited pavilion at Expo 2020 we managed to acquire data from 43k survey-participants. During the event, participants were invited to enter individual pods where they were given the opportunity to choose and read about 102 jobs that will be in high demand in the future. As a follow-up, they were asked to determine their top soft skills they possess. The list of skills they could choose out of were judgement & decision making, entrepreneurship, communication, emotional IQ, collaboration, leadership, mindfulness, critical thinking, creativity and self-direction. Based on their choices the corresponding benchmark test would be assigned in order to quantify their readiness to take on a job in the field of marketing, sales, team management, data science and creative industries. These benchmarks tests were made up of ten multiple choice statements asking the user to assess their own behaviour. For example, one of the statements that could be presented was “I like to think first and act later” to which the user could choose one of the following classic survey options: “Strongly disagree”, “Disagree”, “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”. Based on this survey, participants were sent the results of their benchmark tests to their provided emails.



As a result of this, we managed to observe the age groups that were most interested in discovering the jobs of the future and their readiness to take them on. Figure 1 shows the age distribution across all of the expo users.

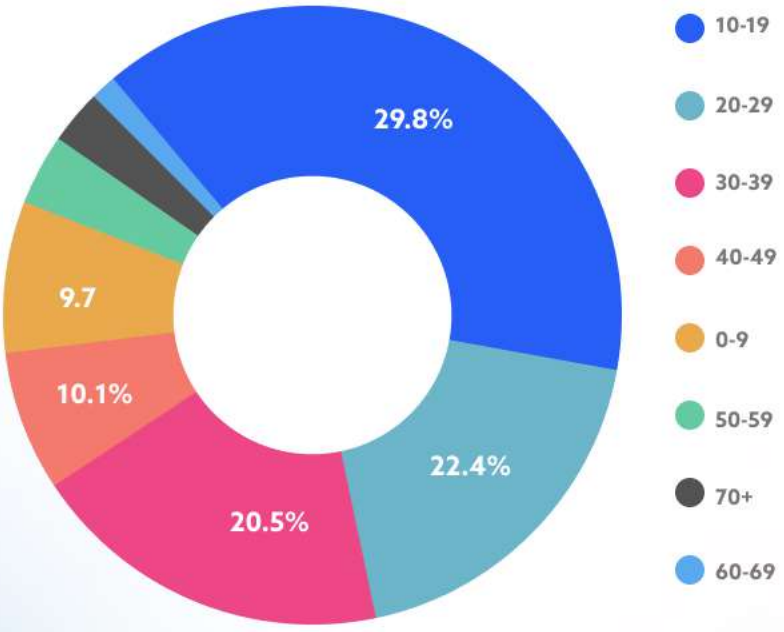


Figure 1. Expo 2020 users age

Out of a pool of 43k users we noticed that the top interest groups were the teenagers who constitute almost a third of the participants (29.8%), followed by the young adults between the ages of 20-29 (22.4%) and the age group of 30-39 (20.5%). The surge in interest among the younger generations with regards to soft skill improvement and job expansion represents one of the key reasons why we should invest in the development of industry-expert mentorship services.

As the event was located in the United Arab Emirates, we provided the participants with the option to choose between having the survey in English or in Arabic. Out of the 43k user pool, 33,545 were English speaking users who took interest in a variety of future jobs descriptions. Below, table 1 shows the top ten jobs chosen.

Job	Percentage from English-speaking users(%)
Biomimicry Innovator	16.20
Time Brokers	16.20
Bioprinting Engineer	13.78
Data Commodities Broker	13.78
New Materials Engineer	13.78
Robot Mechanic	13.78
Gamification Designer	13.45
Chief Ethics Officer	12.92
Hr-Ai Integration Officer	12.92
Ai Educator	11.36

Table 1. Top 10 job selection for English-speaking users

The job interest can suggest the future demand in domain-specific soft-skill mentorship while the benchmark tests show the current soft-skill status of the future employees and employers. Looking at the results of the benchmark tests (Figure 2) we found that there was a high personal skill assessment related to the creativity industry with 30,26% of the users being assigned the Creative Professional benchmark followed by the Sales benchmark (21,67%) and Data Science (14,76%). Team Management and Marketing were the least assigned benchmarks with a percentage of 11,73% and 7,95%, respectively, showing that users are more likely to assess their creative, persuasive and analytical skills as primary skills while managerial and marketing abilities come second.

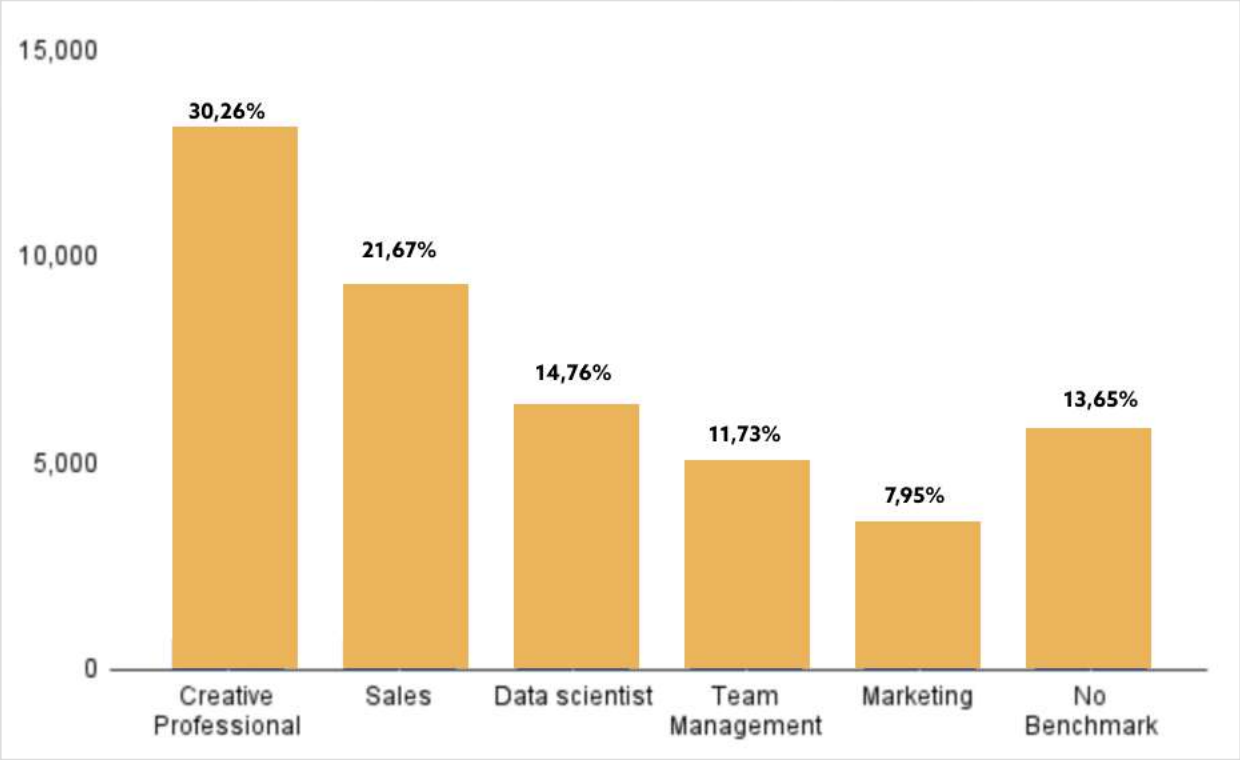


Figure 2. Representation of the number and percentages benchmark tests that were assigned to the users.

When looking closer at the benchmark test results we noticed that most users earned a percentage score of 40-60% (Figure 3). Among the 5 benchmarks, the percentage of users who obtained these scores fell in a range of 61-76% proving that despite the self-assessment of individuals on their top skill-set there is still a lot of space for improvement. This is further proven by the fact that only 0.1-2.2% users from each category were able to score above 80% on the benchmark test emphasising the necessity of soft-skill mentorship services for the current and future employers and employees.

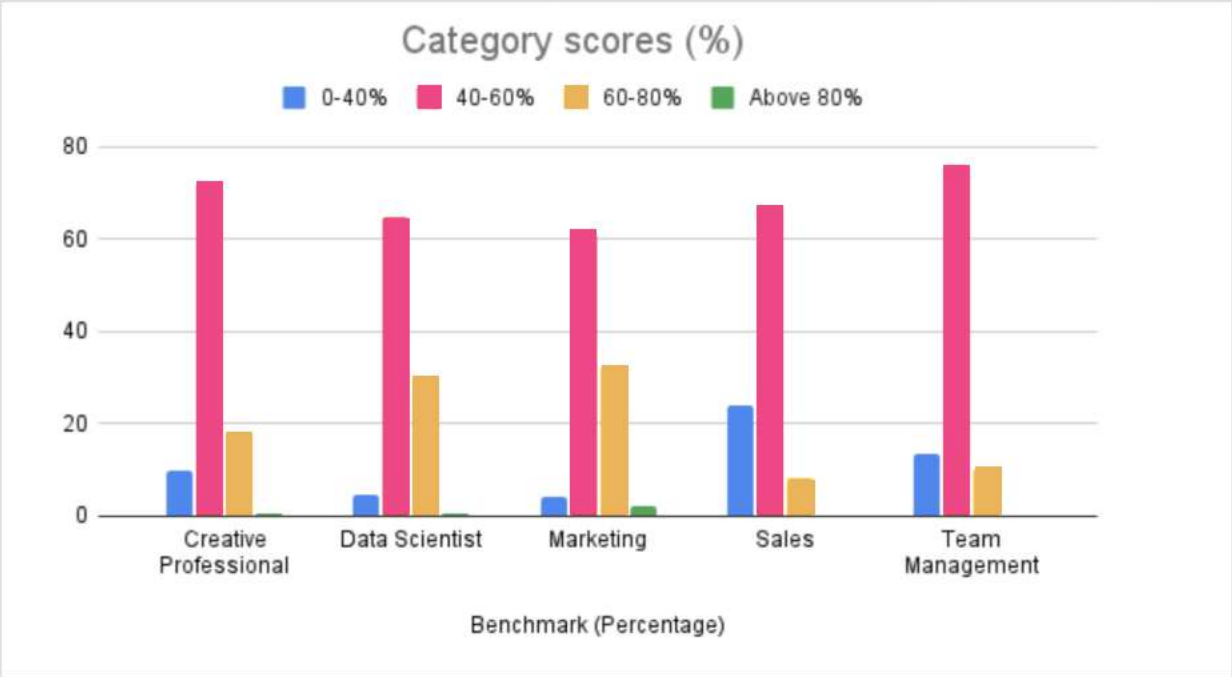


Figure 3 . Percentage of users who have completed the benchmarks and the assigned percentage score.

New age technologies, new age skills - New wine in the same bottle.

The importance of new age technologies have brought to the fore the need to equip individuals with transferable skills that can help with easy transitions and offer a gateway to success across industries and sectors. While the demand for soft/transferable skills remains unchallenged, with the need for such skills and the way to get there being reiterated by the biggest names in the world of work, the skills in question and the methods of developing these are seeing a shift.

Deloitte has hypothesised that "Empowering workers with agency and choice creates more value than overly prescriptive approaches." By placing the onus of the learning and development journey on workers, the company is giving importance to the ability of workers to customise their learning pathways so as to be driven by internal motivation to pursue their own areas of interest and/or strength.

Based on a review of job ads posted, an analysis by Harvard Business Review[1] shows that companies have begun listing almost 33% more skills on such ads in 2020, as compared to 2017. "Ultimately, organizations simply can't reskill the capabilities of their existing workforce fast enough to meet their changing needs." This bodes well for individual learners who invest in keeping their skill set up to date with the skills that will dominate the future of work.

The shift to digital accelerated during the pandemic has brought about concerns with respect to the skills shortage.

[1]Source : *https://hbr.org/2021/01/9-trends-that-will-shape-work-in-2021-and-beyond*

As the workforce was required to move online, the sheer number of those who couldn't navigate the newly required skills became evident, calling for reskilling at a massive scale. A World Economic Forum Report[2] found that the number of people accessing online learning has increased manifold across all categories of learners - those that are self initiated, those who take up workplace based offers to learn online, and those that access online learning through government programmes.

This points to the establishment of a workplace environment that demands active learning to be a part of every worker's repertoire of (desirable) qualities.

As for the specific skills that the future of work will need, a study by McKinsey Global Institute has codifying 56 specific skills (and attitudes) - into a framework known as DELTAs (Fig 4).

Figure 4. DELTAs framework showing 56 specific skills from study by McKinsey Gloabl Institute[3]

[2]*Source : https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020/digest*

[3]*Source : https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work*

What we can't stop thinking about - What next?

Based on our experience in the field of skill development by bringing GLEAC to 60K users, we have found four major pathways of skill development that focus on a combination of hard and soft skills with a varying degree of weightage. These are:

- **Formal Education** - This leverages the benefits of structured dissemination and assimilation of information, aided by regular assessments.
- **Vocational/Practical Training** - This is generally a route taken as an alternative to formal education for specialised work such as technicians for medical facilities, groundskeepers / maintenance, plumbing and welding, pilots, artists, chefs, illustrators, real estate agents, etc. The age of building soft skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, creativity, etc. through gaming and interactive learning modules could also be considered under this category.
- **Apprenticeships / Work Experience** - Another avenue for skill development is real work experience of working in a workplace of interest or availability. The requirements of a workplace include people management, time management, cognitive dexterity, critical thinking and decision making, among others. The combination of these skills while pushing the envelope with respect to one's work is a demanding and rewarding experience.
- **Mentorship / Guidance** - The act of both providing and receiving mentorship and guidance can be extremely rewarding for individuals. Intergenerational mentorship has already shown to have beneficial effects on both generations with respect to cognitive and emotional development and stability. The nature of the dynamic working landscape - a recurring theme for this paper - is one of the reasons that individuals often find themselves without appropriate guidance with respect to their own novel fields of interest.

How GLEAC works

A typical GLEAC user begins by taking a benchmark test that maps his/her skills on a spectrum, rather than a binary. Following the mapping exercise, a customised learning pathway is charted for the individual user focusing on building specific sets of skills. New micro-lessons are provided each day based upon a specific learning pathway and daily practice is nudged using the science of motivation and habit formation. The lessons are designed by experienced curriculum and content designers following a pedagogy of incremental complexity. A rigorous measurement mechanism leverages AI and data analytics, as well as (most notably) a real world 360- degree feedback loop to complement lesson/app performance, capturing the trend of a user's learning journey on their individual performance dashboard.

Therefore, this dynamic competency mapping offers the most realistic representation of a user's capabilities. This competency mapping is layered with an additional exercise of job-skill mapping that has been conducted in-house. A list of present and future jobs, as well as the requisite skills for each of these has been drawn up, which when placed alongside the competency maps of individual users, can help in determining the best fit of roles for these users. Conversely, users can also use this exercise to focus on the specific skills they want to develop, based on desirable jobs and profiles, enabling an active self-learning approach. We have also built a dedicated mentor community of industry experts that offers insights, learning and expertise at an organisation level for partners who would want to train their employees on specific skills / processes through real world experience and advice. In this manner, GLEAC combines vocational training with mentorship and structured guidance for a unique approach to sticky skill development.

Our model stands ready to help organisations adopt the major approaches envisioned that can potentially close the skills gap including, but not limited to, personalization of learning process and outcomes (often at scale); transparency and accountability of the learning process; contributing to a larger learning and development agenda through targeted technology. Based on client requirements, our social and data scientists are able to customise the learning process including the specific set of skills being measured / strengthened.

The Value of Mentorship

While our original approach was limited to the second major pathway of skills development - through skills training, we have also integrated the fourth major pathway - that of mentorship and guidance - into our methodology in a big way. Increasing levels of engagement, as well as the lower costs of transmission, offered by the new age internet are aiding in providing learners with access and agency. Many are finding it easier to identify and reach out to experts and industry leaders in previously unknown or inadequately understood new fields.

GLEAC's novel methodology has been enhanced through the curation of a unique mentorship community that is dedicated to ensuring that the GLEAC experience remains one of a kind for all its users.

Thus, true to its mission, GLEAC is at the forefront of supporting every individual's journey to building their skill set for the jobs that they want to occupy or create for themselves. Specifically, by focussing on Vocational / Practical Training and Mentorship / Guidance, GLEAC is creating a robust platform of resources and support for a wholesome, experiential learning and development journey, designed with the interest of the individual user taking centre stage.

THE POWER OF BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Through the 360 degree feedback loop and an engaged, vibrant community of Industry leaders, GLEAC bolsters its pedagogy through practical mentorship by practitioners - their experience having a premium that is only recently beginning to be quantified. In its report titled "Human Capital at Work[4]: The Value of Experience", researchers at McKinsey conducted a longitudinal study into the specific career trajectories in four countries. They found that "skills acquired or demonstrated through work experience contribute an average of 46 percent of lifetime earnings on average."

[4]**Source** :*https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/human%20capital%20at%20work%20the%20value%20of%20experience/mgi-human-capital-report-execsummary-jun2022.pdf?shouldIndex=false*

Levelling Up Mentorship: The GLEAC NFT

As an early pioneer in the field of technology driven, science backed, skill development space, GLEAC has amassed a successful record of implementing its customised model to different organisations at scale for some time. Given that we have always looked to the future to design the present, we are taking the next leap. Lovely Humans by GLEAC was launched as the first Web3.0 industry expert's marketplace. Through Lovely Humans, we have created a utility NFT in order to trade the time of its curated panel of Industry experts. As we have discussed before, utility based NFTs offer a more sustainable and meaningful form of engagement with users.

Web3, NFTs and the Metaverse: A sandbox for entrepreneurs

Evolving from a series of developments towards greater transparency and engagement, Web3 was envisioned to be one that facilitated decentralisation, and belonged to everyone through more transparent communication and protocols. The security and trust that blockchain technology imparts (which forms the basis of Web3), through its shared, open-source ledger format, is a strong driver for this facilitation. The move towards a sophisticated version of the semantic web (also known as Web3 - one that would help make meaningful connections between the abundant information, as well as interactions, available online) was encouraged by the strengthening of online social networks.

In the case of digital learning and skill development at the workplace, web and app based learning communities/platforms were able to effectively extend the realm of a physical learning setting to the digital realm. This is soon to witness an exponential upgrade, given the promise of Web3 technologies such as NFTs and the Metaverse.

Non Fungible Tokens, or NFTs, are a new category of tokens that represent ownership of digital assets (such as images, art, music, etc.) without necessarily transferring the ownership of the physical asset. However, NFTs have largely been seen as yet another temporary wave, with little chance of success, given their limited utility. The overemphasis on narrative value in comparison to utility value is seen as a potential for economic collapse of the NFT ecosystem. However, a higher degree of engagement and interactivity within NFTs is seen as a gamechanger for the future of NFTs.

A related technological development to that of blockchain based NFTs is the Metaverse. It represents a virtual space "where people can do real world human things, such as work, play, shop, socialize etc." People can build and create and have people purchase or lease their creations, much like in the real world.

All of these elements within the ambit of Web3 - NFTs, the Metaverse and others, are creating opportunities for entrepreneurs to expand the realm of digital value creation and dissemination through continuous iterative design and experimentation.

With the large-scale efforts globally to target the time and attention of individuals, these have become the most valuable resource that people possess, and can potentially trade. In this spirit, GLEAC is levelling up its model of complementing skill based training with guidance and mentorship by industry experts from various fields who can help in accelerating the learning journey for both people and organisations especially in emerging sectors such as metaverse/ web3.0. AI/data, sustainability and fintech. GLEAC has always believed that the future is human. Through the GLEAC NFT, and dedicated interaction with industry leaders, we are working to ensure that every GLEAC user can afford to be the best version of their unique human selves.

How the GLEAC NFT works

The GLEAC NFT will allow users to bid for 5 hours of the industry experts time in order to brainstorm, create something new or learn a concept, work on a specific problem statement, or anything else that can be thought of.. The newly minted NFT, along with all the content in the time spent with the industry expert then belongs to the user. Besides exclusive ownership of the content, users also get access to the entire GLEAC industry experts' community through exclusive events and other interactive formats. A visual representation of membership to this exclusive community is also included for users as badges and/or artwork.

Through the GLEAC NFT launch, for the first time in history, anybody can have access to the world's most brilliant minds. Having the choice to spend those 5 hours with these industry experts in any way YOU would consider relevant could lead to the birth of some of the greatest ideas, companies, projects and, why not, potentially the solutions to the world's biggest problems!

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