

Skills for Employability

The far-reaching skilling initiative that's helping India's youth realize their employability potential.

It has been widely reported that India currently enjoys an extraordinary 'demographic dividend'. **More than half of its population is below the age of 25 years, and over 60 percent are in the working age group (15 to 59 years).** However, it is also commonly recognized that this huge labour force needs to be equipped with suitable skills and knowledge to bring out its full potential and fuel the nation's economic growth. Hence, there is an urgent need to boost the employment potential of working-age Indians, especially youth, by training them in industry-relevant skills.

The Learn and Earn program is responding to this challenge in a far-reaching, innovative manner. The success story of Govind Shamra Gadhvi, a rural youth who has graduated from this program, holds out a promise of a brighter future for many like him...



A DREAM REALIZED

Govind was born in a small village in Kutch (Gujarat). After his schooling, he joined the Government Polytechnic in the nearby town of Bhuj, leading to a Diploma (Mechanical). However, the lack of suitable employment opportunities in and around his native region was frustrating his professional aspirations. Like millions of other youths, he dreamt of an extraordinary career that would help him realize his true potential. Unfortunately, he felt himself to be stuck in a rut and heading towards a future of mediocrity.

An unexpected turning point for Govind was his selection for skill training in the aerospace sector under the Learn and Earn program-- an initiative for college students, unemployed youth, and young professionals seeking employment. **Here, Govind enjoyed exciting opportunities to acquire hands-on experience by working on state-of-the-art machinery, such as the Computer Numerical Control (CNC) and Coordinate Measuring Machines (CMMs), which had formerly just read about in books.** He became confident with his knowledge of concepts like Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing (GD&T), ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers) 14.5, and non-conventional welding processes, among others.



Working with machines in the laboratory allowed him to apply his classroom training in situations that mirrored actual industry conditions.

Through this program, Govind had the opportunity to work on live projects during his on-the-job training. While working under experienced team members, he gained knowledge about the aerospace industry, and went the extra mile, including working night shifts, to learn more. Apart from domain skills, he also benefited from other aspects of the program, which focused on building employability skills, as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) framework: learning to learn; communication; teamwork; and problem-solving.



Finally, Govind's dreams were realized as he was selected for a full-time job opportunity with a reputed aerospace company, where he is currently working. In future, he wants to start his own company in his village so that he can provide employment opportunities to the youth of his village.

In his own words, Govind says, *"This program focuses not only on the theoretical part, but also on practical training, which has helped in developing us as professionals. The concept itself is exciting, giving real meaning to the term 'Skilling India', and has brought us all the way from Bhuj to be trained in the aerospace tooling sector."*

CONCLUSION

The Learn and Earn program provides an all-inclusive framework for developing an individual's ability to secure a job and retain employment, in the process also creating a pipeline of competent workforce for the nation. Such initiatives have a vital role to play if our nation has to realize its full growth potential and fulfil the aspirations of its youth population.

HOW THIS PROJECT CONTRIBUTES TO THE UN SDGs

SDG 1: No Poverty
SDG 4: Quality Education
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities