TeamLease® Digital

DIGITAL SKILLS AND SALARY PRIMER

FY2025-26

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Foreword: Digital Skills & Salary Primer FY2025-26

India's technology sector is no stranger to disruption—but what we are witnessing today is unlike any wave before. The acceleration of AI, cloud, and cybersecurity is not just reshaping how businesses operate—it is redefining what they expect from their people. Global Capability Centers (GCCs), IT services firms, and even traditional non-tech industries (BFSI, Healthcare, Semiconductor, etc.) are rapidly integrating digital roles at the core of their growth strategies.

These changes bring immense opportunity, but they also introduce complexity. From GenAI and data engineering to enterprise-grade cybersecurity, organizations are building entirely new capability stacks. With this comes a critical question: Do we have the right talent, in the right place, at the right time? India's digital economy is fast becoming a cornerstone of national growth—projected to reach $1.2 trillion by FY2029-30 and contribute nearly one-fifth of the country's GDP. The workforce driving this transformation is now defined less by static job titles and more by dynamic capabilities. AI-native operating models, cross-functional agility, and continuous innovation are reshaping the DNA of both talent and leadership.

In this new landscape, "Leadership 2.0" is rising. CXO roles are evolving into AI-integrated mandates. Chief AI Officers (CAIOs), Chief Data Officers (CDOs), and Chief Product Officers (CPOs) are steering GenAI governance, while CFOs, CHROs, and CMOs are embedding AI-based intelligence into their core strategies. This marks a shift from traditional functional oversight to orchestrating digital value across the enterprise.

Geography, too, is being redefined. While metros like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Mumbai continue to command a 15–20% salary premium—especially at mid to senior levels—Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities are quickly closing the gap. Cities such as Pune, Coimbatore, and Indore are emerging as agile, high-value destinations for next-gen digital roles. Employers are rebalancing workforce distribution, focusing on accessing niche talent and driving distributed delivery models—laying the foundation for a more resilient digital ecosystem.

The Digital Skills and Salary Primer FY2025-26 aims to address the most pressing talent questions of our time. Analyzing over 30,000 tech and digital roles across sectors, this report highlights where demand is intensifying, how salaries are evolving, and what it takes to stay ahead. Whether it's emerging job roles, fast-moving AI skills, or leadership transitions in an automation-first economy, this edition offers a grounded, data-backed view of India's digital workforce.

At TeamLease Digital, we believe that thriving in this environment demands more than technical skills. It requires agility, continuous learning, and a culture that values both innovation and inclusion. This report is designed as a guide—for employers shaping their workforce strategies and for professionals navigating an increasingly dynamic career landscape. The pace of change is rapid. But with the right insights and intent, India is well on its way to building a future-ready workforce as ambitious as the economy it serves.

Neeti Sharma,
Chief Executive Officer
TeamLease DIgital

Introduction

The Digital Skills & Salary Primer (DSSP) FY2025-26 is released at a critical juncture, as India's talent economy stands on the edge of a deep transformation. What began as a linear shift toward digital adoption has now accelerated into an era defined by AI-native operating models, global delivery agility, and a re-architecture of work. Enterprises are no longer just hiring for roles—they are investing in capabilities. As AI, cloud, cybersecurity, and advanced analytics reshape how organizations operate, the premium on future-ready talent has become a strategic differentiator.

The emergence of a skills-first economy is no longer theoretical. It is visible in boardroom mandates, budget priorities, and workforce composition. Salaries are being recalibrated to reflect skill intensity, role criticality, and transformation potential. Notably, Global Capability Centers (GCCs)—now contributing over 55% of global GCC value delivery—are anchoring India's rise as a digital innovation hub, with leadership pipelines increasingly geared towards platform orchestration, GenAI governance, and enterprise-scale automation.

What is equally compelling is the velocity at which non-tech sectors are integrating technology roles at the core of business functions. BFSI, manufacturing, retail, and healthcare are embedding digital skills in compliance, supply chain, experience, and finance workflows—blurring the line between tech and non-tech employment.

This report offers a strategic lens to decode where digital talent value is concentrating, how new skills are commanding premiums, and what organizations must prioritize to build a resilient, AI-aligned workforce. In short, DSSP FY2025-26 is not just a benchmarking tool—it is a blueprint for navigating the next wave of competitive advantage.

Executive Summary

AI-led Roles Command Premiums Amid Severe Talent Gaps	AI/GenAI, Cloud, Data Engineering, and Cybersecurity are redefining salary trajectories, with senior AI roles reaching **₹60 LPA** and a **40–53% talent gap**. GCCs and enterprises are scaling AI-integrated teams rapidly, positioning AI-first hiring as a strategic talent imperative.
Leadership Roles Undergo an AI-Driven Reset Across All Sectors	CXO roles are evolving into cross-functional, AI-native leadership mandates across GCCs, tech, and non-tech sectors. CAIOs, CDOs, and CPOs are leading GenAI governance, while CFOs, CHROs, and CMOs now anchor AI-based risk, people, and customer intelligence—ushering in the Leadership 2.0 era.
Tier-Based Salary Premiums Point to Strategic Workforce Planning	Metro cities continue to command a **15–20% salary premium** across mid-senior levels, but Tier-1 and Tier-2 hubs are rapidly closing the gap-especially for AI, Cloud, and Cybersecurity roles. Employers are rebalancing workforce distribution to optimize cost and access niche talent.
Cross-sector Demand Signals Reveal Clear Functional Winners for FY2025-26	AI, Cybersecurity, Data Engineering, and DevOps are now sector-agnostic capabilities, with BFSI, Healthcare, Retail, and Manufacturing driving demand. In contrast, roles in IT Support, Legacy Systems, and Low-Code are facing stagnation, prompting re-skilling and portfolio realignment.
Non-Tech Sectors Fuel Tech Hiring Momentum with Domain-Led Demand	Tech hiring in BFSI, Manufacturing, and Retail is growing faster than in IT Services, with roles in Digital Transformation, Cybersecurity, and Cloud emerging as critical enablers. These sectors are replatforming legacy stacks and investing in domain-aligned digital talent.
Skill-Based Salary Signals Highlight Transition from Ops to Innovation Roles	High growth in salaries is concentrated around innovation-aligned roles—AI, MLOps, Cloud—where 3-year CAGR exceeds **18%**. Meanwhile, operational roles like Full Stack, DevOps, and API are maturing, showing slower hikes, and signaling a shift in enterprise investment priorities.

Workforce & Skills Landscape

The Digital Economy & Talent Demand

Platform Models Are Expanding the Employment Spectrum

The rise of platform-based ecosystems is reshaping employment — from formalized gig work and hyperlocal service delivery to cloud-enabled knowledge work.This is unlocking flexible workforce models even in traditional sectors like automotive and FMCG, leading to hybrid employment structures.

Gig Economy Is a Structural Talent Layer — Not Just a Buffer

India's gig workforce is **~12–15 million** in **FY2024–25**. By 2029–30, it is projected to reach **~23.5 million**— about **6.7%** of the non-agricultural workforce (NITI Aayog, 2022). Looking further out, a recent study from the Ministry of Labour projects **~62 million by 2047**—around **15%** of the non-agricultural workforce.

AI Is Creating a Two-Speed Workforce Shift

AI adoption is accelerating demand in areas like AI Ops, AI product strategy, and decision intelligence — even as legacy roles face displacement. Net employment gains are visible, but the speed of workforce reskilling will determine long-term sustainability over the **next 3–5 years**.

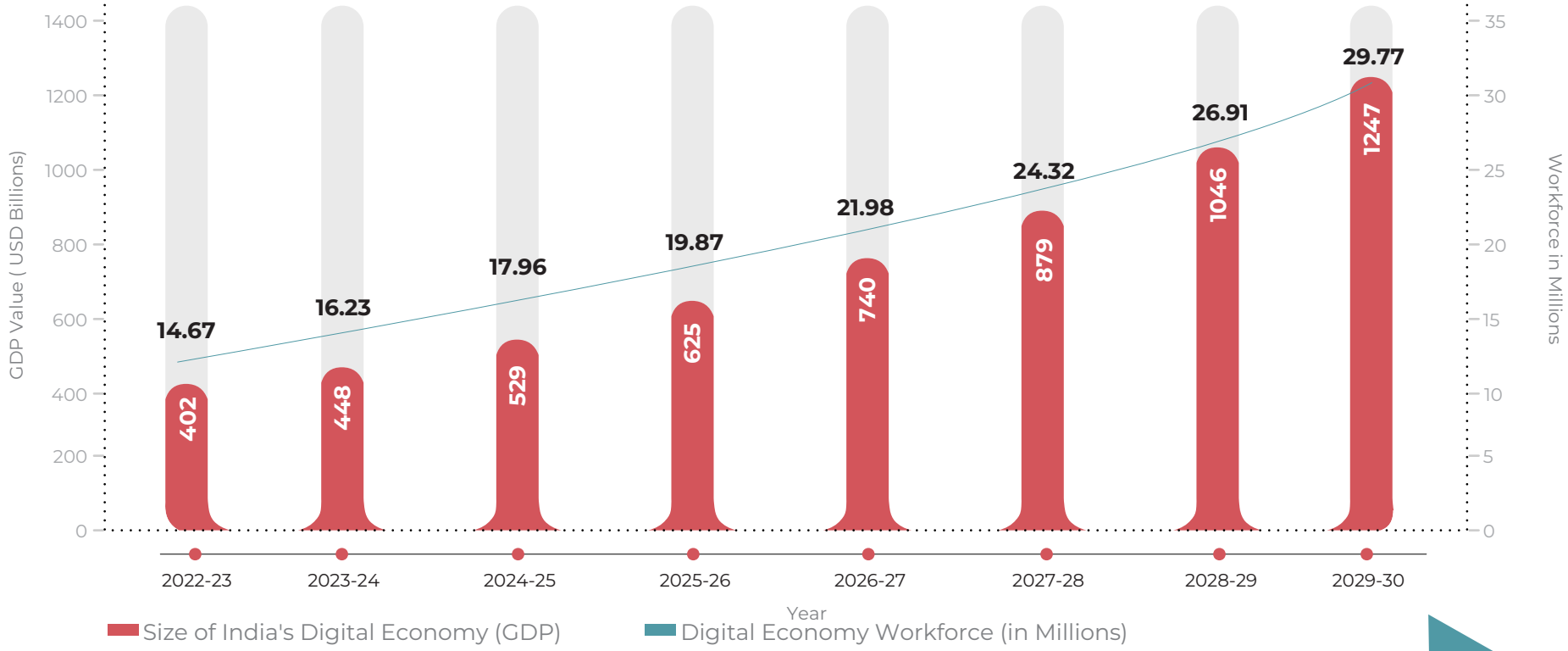
FY2025-26 Is a Defining Window for Skilling Outcome

A convergence of public and private skilling programs in FY2025-26 will influence whether India's digital and AI-led sectors drive inclusive employment.The alignment of workforce capabilities with GenAI-era demands will be central to future employment resilience.

India's Digital Economy Now Fuels Employment at Scale

India's digital economy now contributes **~15% of GDP** in FY2025-26, and is projected to reach **$1.2 trillion** by FY2029-30. This momentum is translating into broad-based employment across sectors like retail, BFSI, logistics, and manufacturing — driven by digital adoption at the enterprise core.

Size of Digital Economy and Workforce (Tech & Non-Tech) Numbers



The Digital Economy refers to all economic activities that use digital technologies as a core part of business processes, products, or services. It is set to grow to 1.2 trillion dollars by 2029-30 and contribute nearly one-fifth of the nation's GDP. This rapid expansion is creating millions of jobs across both tech and non-tech roles that enable and support the digital ecosystem.

For the digital economy to make larger strides in the coming years, the backbone supporting it is core digital skills that must be strengthened.

Skills in areas like AI, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data analytics are essential for building, securing, and advancing digital platforms and services. These skills are critical for ensuring that the digital economy achieves its full potential.

Beyond the tech sector, digital roles are expanding in BFSI, healthcare, retail, manufacturing, logistics, and telecom. Key digital non-tech skills include product analytics, digital marketing, cloud-based finance operations, UI/UX design, and industry-specific CRM/ERP systems.

Note: The workforce size of the digital economy has been calculated by us using the CAGR 10.64% referring the report. Government of India, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) of 2025, January.

AI Disruption & Future Skills Demand

India's AI market is entering a hyper-growth phase.
India's AI market is tracking to **~$17B** by 2027; talent is set to double to **~1.25M by 2027** (**≈16%** of global AI talent). Growth is being pulled by enterprise spend, national digital rails, and an abundant STEM pipeline.

A critical GenAI talent shortage is emerging.
For every **10 open GenAI** roles, only **1 qualified engineer** is available, spotlighting the urgent need for deep-tech talent development.

Increasing Talent demand for Enterprise AI.
A 53% talent gap in AI roles is projected by 2026, threatening toconstrain enterprise AI ambitions unless scaled interventions are implemented.

AI will fundamentally reshape job markets.
Up to **40% of global roles** are expected to be impacted by AI, with sectors like **IT services, customer experience, BFSI, and healthcare** most exposed.

Future skill requirements are evolving rapidly.
In addition to technical proficiency, demand is rising for **digital literacy, cross-functional collaboration, AI orchestration, and creative problem-solving.**

AI capability building is becoming an enterprise-wide priority.
Organizations are now driving AI literacy and hybrid human-AI workflow training across leadership and business functions — making broad-based upskilling central to their talent strategy.

AI-centric curricula are now an educational imperative.
Industry leaders are advocating for **AI-first, experiential learning models** to align talent pipelines with future market requirements.

GenAI: Creative Disruption & Emerging Roles

With GenAI tools driving content, code, and design tasks, roles in marketing, content ops, and UI/UX are rapidly evolving. As per research, this is fueling demand for **prompt engineering, domain-tuned fine-tuning, and LLM safety training** — skilling priorities for non-tech and tech teams alike.

AI Agents: The Rise of Reasoning Systems

Modern AI agents now execute multi-step tasks using memory, reasoning, and tool access. This shift is creating jobs in **AI orchestration, workflow chaining, and agent design** — especially in R&D, legal tech, and enterprise automation. Legacy rule-based roles like manual QA and basic scripting are at high risk of disruption.

Agentic AI: The Autonomous Teammate

Agentic AI marks a future where AI sets goals, negotiates trade-offs, and acts with autonomy. This demands **new skills** in multi-agent governance, ethical oversight, and simulation modeling. Roles in **AI safety, autonomous system design**, and AI compliance will gain critical importance as enterprises scale autonomy.

Fast-Rising AI Skills: Industry Adoption, Use-Cases & Salary Benchmarks (FY2025-26)

Sector-Specific Acceleration

Fast-rising AI skills are witnessing concentrated demand across India's top GCCs, AI-first startups, and tech unicorns, particularly in sectors undergoing AI-fueled transformation like BFSI, healthcare, and manufacturing. In these industries, skills such as LLM safety tuning, AI compliance, and orchestration are now considered foundational for enterprise-wide automation, customer trust, and regulatory alignment.

AI Skill	What It Means	Industry Use-Cases	Top Hiring Cities	Avg Salary (Mid-Level)
Prompt Engineering	Designing high-quality inputs to guide LLMs	Customer bots, document generation, AI tutors	Bengaluru, Pune	₹22–28 LPA
LLM Safety & Tuning	Fine-tuning, bias detection, guardrails for LLM output	BFSI compliance bots, healthcare summaries, content moderation	Hyderabad, NCR	₹20–26 LPA
AI Orchestration	Managing workflows across AI models and systems	Automation chains in legal tech, RPA + AI systems	Chennai, Bengaluru	₹24–30 LPA
Agent Design	Architecting reasoning agents with memory and autonomy	HR copilots, procurement agents, enterprise copilots	Pune, Hyderabad	₹25–32 LPA
Simulation Governance	Creating safe, ethical, and testable AI simulation environments	Digital twins in manufacturing, scenario testing in smart cities	Bengaluru, Mumbai	₹26–35 LPA
AI Compliance & Risk Ops	Governing AI deployment through risk frameworks, audits & regulation	DPDP compliance, AI audits, regulatory submissions in BFSI	NCR, Mumbai, Hyderabad	₹18–24 LPA

Workforce Shift to Enterprise-Grade AI

As AI adoption matures, enterprises are moving from experimentation to scaled deployment — fueling demand for roles that govern, simulate, and orchestrate AI at production-grade levels. Mid-level professionals with expertise in prompt engineering, agent design, and simulation governance are emerging as the new linchpins of AI strategy, especially in cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune.

Note: LLM = Large Language Model. DPDP = Digital Personal Data Protection Bill (India). 'Mid-Level' refers to professionals with 5–12 years of experience.

Salary Matrix

The Three Key Categories of Digital Employment—Tech in Tech, Tech in Non-Tech, and Tech in GCCs

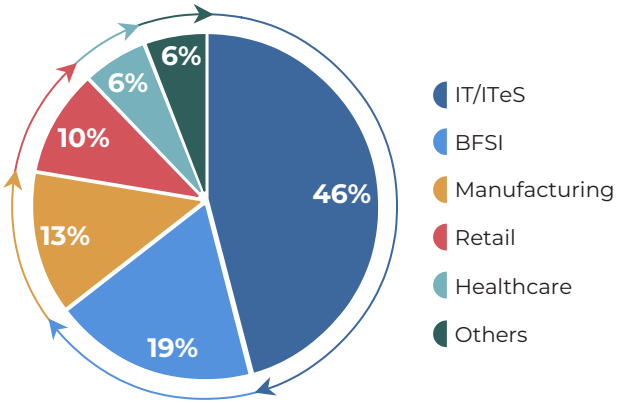
Tech in Global Capability Centers (GCCs)

India's GCC Landscape: FY2025-26 Snapshot

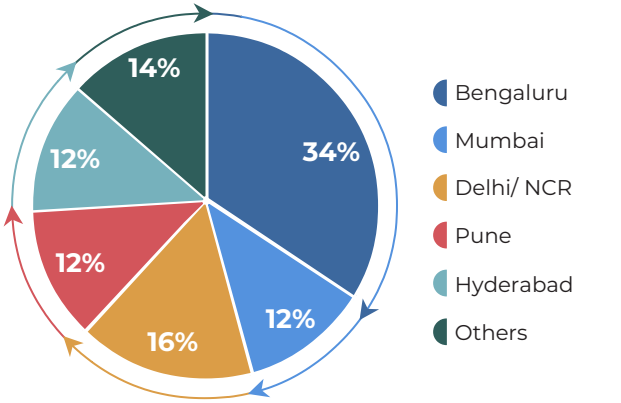
India is home to **1,760+ Global Capability Centers** across nearly **3,000 delivery hubs**, employing **2.16 million** professionals—a figure projected to reach **3 million by 2030**. As GCCs evolve into hubs for AI, engineering, and product innovation, the ecosystem is witnessing a decisive **shift toward Tier 2/3 cities and end-to-end global mandates**, redefining India's role in enterprise transformation.

Theme	Data Point
Job Market Growth	GCCs are expected to contribute over **22–25%** of net new white-collar techjobs in **2025**, led by AI & cloud.
Tech-Driven Future	Over **1.2M of the 4.7M** new tech jobs by **2027** will be generated by GCCs across domains like GenAI, ER&D.
Talent Pool	GCCs are projected to hire **~400K** freshers cumulatively by **2030**, with **~130–140K** fresh hires in **FY2024-25** alone—driven by expansion into Tier-2 and Tier-3 engineering campuses.
Diversity Momentum	GCCs lead India's DEI evolution, hiring women at **1.5x** the industry average — **40%** share in **top 20** GCCs.
AI Impact	GCCs account for **30–35%** of AI hiring in India, with over **300,000** AI-related roles expected by **2028**.
GCCs	India projected to host **2,100+** GCCs by **2027**, employing **3M** professionals—**800** net new centers added.

Industries: 2024



Share of Talent



Headcount: 1.9M in FY2024-25 to 3M in 2030

Geography: Shift from Tier 1 to Tier 2 and 3 - Jaipur, Vadodara, Nasik, Coimbatore, Indore

Note: Data triangulated from NASSCOM, industry reports (EY, BCG, TeamLease), and secondary databases as of FY2024–25.

Shifting Salary Premiums: Top 10 Tech Skills Powering GCC Talent Strategies

Salary Benchmarks for Top 10 Tech Skills in GCCs (₹ LPA)

Average Salary Change Across 3 Years (₹ LPA)

Skill	Skill Type	Functional Area	Role Alignment	0-3 Yrs (LPA)	3-5 Yrs (LPA)	5-8 Yrs (LPA)	8+ Yrs (LPA)	Demand Trend	FY25	FY26	FY27
Generative AI Engineering	New	AI & Generative AI	GenAI Engineer, NLP Specialist	12	25	40	60	Rising	31.5	34.5	37.5
Cloud Computing	Current	Core Tech & Software Development	Cloud Architect, Infrastructure Engineer	10.6	18	30	45	Rising	24	26	28
Data Engineering	Current	Data Engineering & Science	Data Engineer, ETL Developer	10.4	19	28	42	Rising	23	25	27
Cybersecurity	Current	Cybersecurity & Privacy	Cybersecurity Analyst, SOC Specialist	11.2	22	35	55	Rising	28	31	33.5
MLOps	New	DevOps & Site Reliability Engineering	ML Ops Engineer	12	24	38	58	Rising	29	33	37.5
Full Stack Development	Current	Full Stack Development	Full Stack Developer	9.8	16	25	38	Steady	21.5	22	23
API & Microservices	Current	Backend & API Development	Backend Developer, API Developer	9.2	15	24	36	Steady	20.5	21	22
DevOps & CI/CD	Current	AI & Generative AI	DevOps Engineer, SRE	10.4	17	26	40	Steady	22.5	23.5	24.5
Business Analytics	Current	Business Analytics & Visualization	BI Analyst, Data Visualization Specialist	8.6	14	22	34	Steady	18.5	19.5	21
Low-Code Development	Current	Low-Code & No-Code Application Development	Low-Code Developer, App Developer	8	13	20	30	Declining	17.5	18	18

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness.
Note: Color intensity reflects salary growth rate: darker = faster growth, lighter = slower or flat. This visual scale helps compare salary momentum across tech skills over FY25–27.

Shifting Salary Premiums: Top 10 Tech Skills Powering GCC Talent Strategies (continued)

AI-Driven Roles Redefine Salary Ceilings with Unmatched Growth Velocity

Generative AI Engineering and MLOps are setting new salary benchmarks in GCCs, with senior talent earning **₹58–60 LPA** and YoY increases exceeding **18% annually**. These roles represent a strategic shift toward AI-native operating models, where GCCs are prioritizing high-compute, high-skill talent pipelines to accelerate LLM integration, autonomous decisioning, and IP-led innovation.

Cybersecurity and Data Engineering Cement Core Infrastructure Status

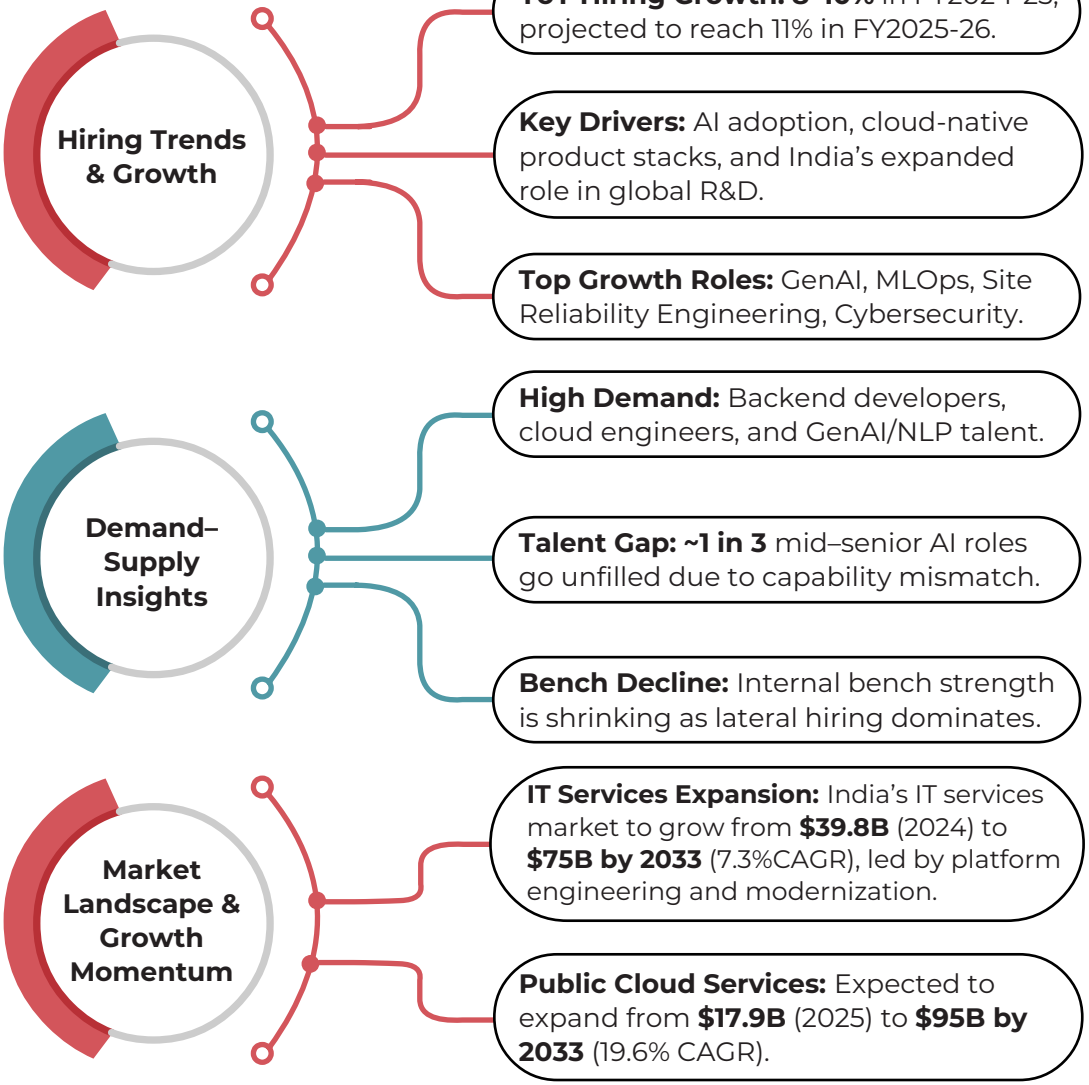
Salaries in Cybersecurity (**₹28→₹33.5 LPA**) and Data Engineering (**₹23→₹27 LPA**) have grown steadily over FY2025-27, underpinned by consistent enterprise-wide demand. Their value lies in enabling AI-readiness at scale—providing secure, compliant, and structured data infrastructure that serves as the bedrock for next-gen platform rollouts.

Mid-Tier Developer Roles Show Signs of Maturity Amid Talent Saturation

Skills like Full Stack, API & Microservices, and DevOps continue to offer stable mid-career salaries (**~₹22–26 LPA**), but YoY salary growth is now tapering off to **2–3%**. These roles are transitioning from high-premium innovation anchors to operational mainstays, as GCCs prioritize scalable and modular AI-first architectures over legacy-heavy delivery stacks.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness.
Note: Color intensity reflects salary growth rate: darker = faster growth, lighter = slower or flat. This visual scale helps compare salary momentum across tech skills over FY25–27.

Overview for Tech in IT Product & Services



Note: All figures presented are derived from proprietary analysis and industry consensus. Where specific percentages are used, they are directional and illustrative unless otherwise cited from published sources (e.g., NASSCOM, BCG, IDC).

Technology Shifts & Innovation Priorities

- AI-first investment momentum builds as **1 in 3** large enterprises establish GenAI budgets, driving **30–35% YoY** skill demand growth.
- Data center expansion accelerates as capacity nearly doubles from **950 MW (2024)** to **1.8 GW by 2026**, powering hyperscale infrastructure growth.

India's Strategic Role in Tech

- India is moving from a service-outsourcing model to becoming a **cloud-native AI product hub** for global R&D.
- National programs like the **IndiaAI Mission** and **BharatGPT** are institutionalizing domestic GenAI capabilities and workforce scaling.

Talent Market & Hiring Dynamics

- Fresher hiring surge gains momentum with **150K+** freshers expected to be hired in **FY2025-26**, particularly in specialized tech domains.
- Mid-level hiring continues to dominate, with a strong tilt toward **3–8 years of experience** for productivity ramp-up.
- Developer billing rates are witnessing a decline due to AI productivity gain. A large share of routine coding tasks is expected to be automated **by 2027**, with GenAI accelerating this shift.

Strategic Growth Signals

- India's tech sector is on track to reach **$300B** by **FY2026-27**, driven by a **17%** surge in software spend in **2025**.
- AI investments now absorb **6.5%** of enterprise tech budgets, with India's AI market forecasted to hit **$17B by 2027 (25–35% CAGR).**

Evolving Salary Patterns Across Top 10 Tech Skills in India's IT Sector

Salary Benchmarks for Top 10 Tech Skills in IT Sector (₹ LPA)

Average Salary Change Across 3 Years (₹ LPA)

Skill	Skill Type	Functional Area	Role Alignment	0-3 Yrs (LPA)	3-5 Yrs (LPA)	5-8 Yrs (LPA)	8+ Yrs (LPA)	Demand Trend	FY25	FY26	FY27
Cloud Computing	Current	Core Tech & Software Development	Cloud Engineer, Infrastructure Specialist	7	12	20	33	Rising	31.5	34.5	37.5
Product Management	Current	Productivity & Agile Methodologies	Technical PM, Product Owner	9	16	26	42	Rising	29	33	37.5
DevOps Engineering	Current	DevOps & Site Reliability Engineering	DevOps Engineer, SRE	7	14	22	33	Rising	23	25	27
Generative AI	New	AI & Generative AI	GenAI Engineer, Prompt Engineer	10	17	28	40	Rising	28	31	33.5
Cybersecurity	Current	Cybersecurity & Privacy	Security Analyst, Penetration Tester	8	14	23	35	Rising	22.5	23.5	24.5
Mobile Development	Current	Mobile & Web Application Development	Android/iOS Developer, Flutter Engineer	6	11	19	28	Steady	21.5	22	23
Data Science	Current	Data Engineering & Science	Data Scientist, Analytics Specialist	8	13	21	32	Steady	20.5	21	22
Full Stack Development	Current	Full Stack Development	Full Stack Developer	6	10	18	27	Steady	24	26	28
Software Architecture	Current	Core Tech & Software	Software Architect, Solution Designer	12	19	30	45	Steady	17.5	18	18
Blockchain Development	New	Blockchain & Web3	Blockchain Developer	8	13	22	34	Declining	18.5	19.5	21

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness. Note: Color intensity reflects salary growth rate: darker = faster growth, lighter = slower or flat. This visual scale helps compare salary momentum across tech skills over FY25–27

Evolving Salary Patterns Across Top 10 Tech Skills in India's IT Sector (continued)

Cloud & Product Roles Surpass Legacy Tracks with 20%+ Salary Growth YoY

Cloud Computing and Product Management have emerged as the top-performing skills in India's IT sector, each registering a **₹ 8 .5 LPA+ gain from FY2024-25 to FY2026-27** (from **₹29–31 to ₹37.5 LPA**). Their growth reflects the sector's pivot from traditional IT services to platform modernization, product ownership, and cloud-native transformation, making these roles the new core in digital-first delivery models.

GenAI and Cybersecurity Sustain Premium Bands, Driven by Trust and Intelligence Priorities

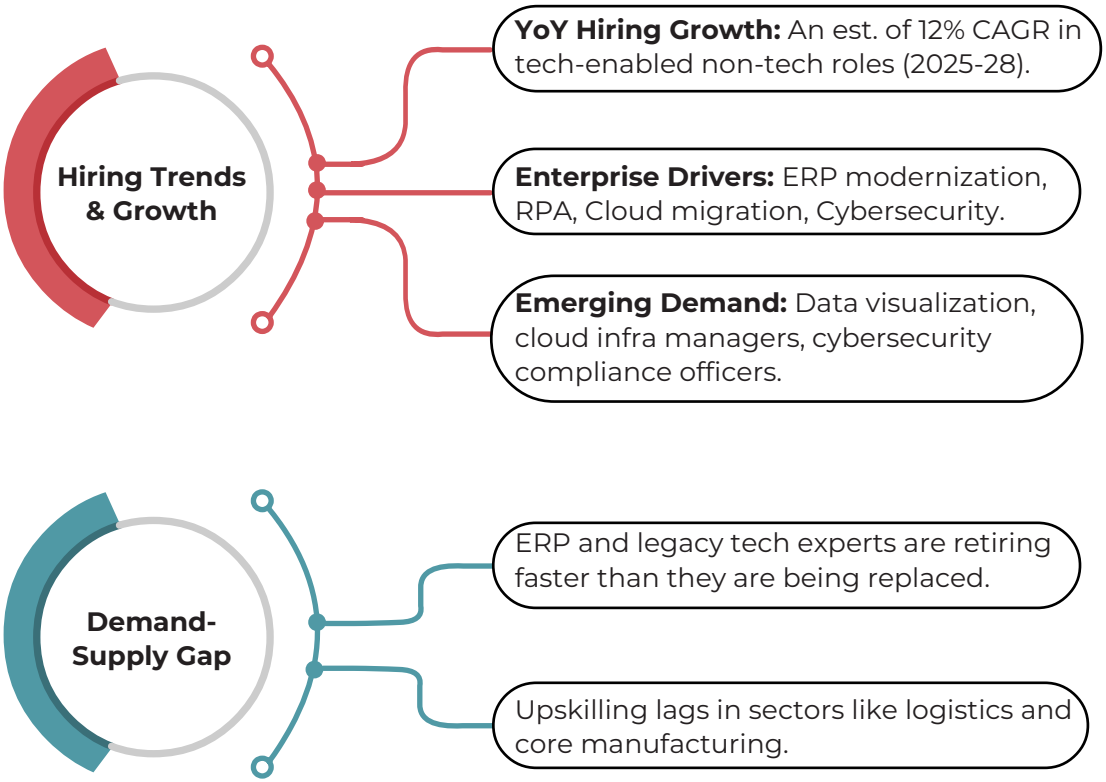
Generative AI salaries rose from **₹ 28-33.5 LPA** over three years (**~10% CAGR**), while Cybersecurity saw steady progression from **₹ 22.5-24.5 LPA**. Together, these roles reflect dual boardroom priorities: AI innovation and cyber resilience — foundational to India's IT delivery in high-risk, high-compliance verticals like BFSI and healthcare.

DevOps and Software Architecture Retain Value, But Salary Curves Are Flattening

While DevOps and Software Architecture continue to earn respectable senior salaries (**₹ 33–45 LPA**), YoY growth is showing signs of plateauing — with **<3% annual hikes by FY2026-27**. This suggests that while still critical for hybrid infrastructure and delivery ops, these roles are no longer the fastest-growing as AI-led roles take precedence.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness.

Overview for Tech in Non-Tech Sectors



Sector Specific Tech Adoption in Non-Tech Verticals

- **Healthcare:** India's health-tech market is projected to reach **$50B by 2033** (~26% CAGR), driven by AI in telemedicine, virtual assistants, and diagnostics.
- **Automotive & Manufacturing:** Over **30% of vehicles** will feature some level of self-driving capabilities by 2030, boosting demand for sensors, AI, and automotive software (market to hit **$80B**). Manufacturers are increasing tech spends from <10% to **11–15%**, focusing on IoT, robotics, and Big Data-intensifying the **demand for upskilled talent**.
- **Semiconductors:** India's chip industry is expected to double from **$54B in 2025 to $108B by 2030** (15% CAGR), fueled by AI, datacenter expansion, and PLI schemes to reduce import dependence.
- **BFSI:** Digital transformation in BFSI is expected to surge from **$108.51B in 2025 to $419.45B by 2034** (16.25% CAGR), driven by AI, hyper-automation, cloud, and cybersecurity-fueling demand for tech talent.
- **Retail & E-commerce:** Adopting GenAI, omnichannel tech, AR/VR, and digital payments, India's e-commerce market will grow from **$165B in FY2025-26 to $345B by FY2029-30** (15% CAGR).

Overview for Tech in Non-Tech Sectors (continued)

Shift in Hiring Intent

- A growing number of non-tech companies are actively building in-house tech teams, driven by digital transformation across BFSI, retail, healthcare, energy, and telecom.
- Tech hiring in these sectors is being propelled by demand for AI, cloud, cybersecurity, and full-stack development expertise.

Digital Growth Momentum

- Enterprises across non-tech sectors are ramping up investments in AI, GenAI, and automation to enhance productivity and reduce operational bottlenecks.
- Government-backed deep tech initiatives and clean energy targets are further accelerating this shift.

Sustainability Drives New Roles

- Green tech adoption is creating new job categories in cleantech engineering, ESG compliance, and carbon accounting.
- EV and renewable energy ecosystems are expanding demand for engineers with clean tech capabilities.

Niche Talent Sees Premium Pay

- Professionals in GenAI, ESG tech, and cloud architecture are commanding premium compensation in non-tech sectors.
- State governments are incentivizing tech hubs beyond metros, aiding local hiring in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.

Sector-Specific Adoption

- BFSI is modernizing through AI-driven analytics and fraud detection.
- Automotive is entering a software-defined vehicle era with GenAI and 5G integration.
- Manufacturing, healthcare, and retail are integrating AI, IoT, and sustainability tech at scale.

Skills Overhaul Underway

- Java full stack, data science, cybersecurity, and cloud roles are now critical across public and private sector firms.
- Tech hiring in Tier-2 cities is increasing as firms diversify location strategy and tap wider talent pools.

Tech in Non-Tech: Evolving Salary Signals Across Top 10 Tech Skills

Salary Benchmarks for Top 10 Tech Skills in Non-Tech Sectors (₹ LPA)

Average Salary Change Across 3 Years (₹ LPA)

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Automation	Current	Robotic Process Automation	RPA Developer, Automation Specialist	4.5	8	15	25	Rising	12	13	14.5
Data Analytics	Current	Business Analytics & Visualization	Business Analyst, Data Visualization Specialist	4	8	14	22	Rising	11	12	13.5
Cybersecurity	Current	Cybersecurity & Privacy	Security Analyst, Compliance Specialist	5.2	9	18	28	Rising	13.5	15	17
Cloud Solutions	Current	Core Tech & Software Development	Cloud Engineer, Migration Specialist	6	11	19	30	Rising	14	16.5	18.5
Digital Transformation	New	Core Tech & Software Development	Digital Strategist, Transformation lead	6	12	20	32	Rising	16	17.5	19.5
System Integration	Current	Core tech & Software Development	Integration Specialist, Systems Analyst	5	9	16	24	Steady	12.5	13.5	14.5
Industry-Specific Applications	Current	Low-Code & No-Code Application Development	Domain Solution Specialist, Industry Consultant	5	9	16	26	Steady	13	14	15
ERP Implementation	Current	ERP & CRM Solution	ERP Consultant, SAP/Oracle Specialist	5	9	15	24	Steady	12.5	13.5	14
IT Support	Current	Infrastructure & IT Service Management	IT Support Specialist, Service Desk Manager	3.5	7	12	20	Declining	10.5	10.5	11
Legacy Systems Maintenance	Current	Core Tech & Software Development	Mainframe Developer, Legacy Systems Specialist	4	7.5	14	22	Declining	12	12	12

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness.
Note: Color intensity reflects salary growth rate: darker = faster growth, lighter = slower or flat. This visual scale helps compare salary momentum across tech skills over FY25–27

Tech in Non-Tech: Evolving Salary Signals Across Top 10 Tech Skills (continued)

Digital Transformation & Data Analytics Are Anchoring Growth-Stage Talent Strategie

Digital Transformation shows the fastest salary escalation across all roles (**₹16→ ₹19.5 LPA in 3 years**), indicating rising demand for transformation architects within customer-centric, AI-first business models. Data Analytics, too, has moved from **₹11-13.5 LPA**, with compensation reflecting its embedded value in driving insight-led operational and customer journeys across non-tech enterprises.

Cloud & Cyber Lead Salary Momentum Amid Non-Tech Sector Digitization

Cloud Solutions and Cybersecurity have emerged as the highest-paid roles in non-tech sectors, with senior salaries crossing **₹28–30 LPA**. These roles also show strong YoY gains — Cloud from **₹14.5 LPA** in **FY2024-25 to ₹18.5 LPA in FY2026-27**, Cybersecurity from **₹13.5-17 LPA**. This reflects how BFSI, retail, and manufacturing sectors are aggressively modernizing IT stacks to enhance resilience and enable secure cloud adoption.

IT Support & Legacy Tech Are Losing Strategic Relevance

Legacy Systems Maintenance and IT Support are showing signs of stagnation, with salaries barely growing (**₹12 LPA flat across FY2025-27 for legacy roles**). Declining demand and muted salary progression suggest that non-tech companies are actively exiting mainframe architectures and in-house IT support in favor of cloud-native, outsourced, or automated service models.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26. Skill Type Definition: Current Skills are in-demand and established today; New Skills are emerging and key to future-readiness.

Cross-Sector Demand Signals for Top 10 Functional Areas

Demand by Functional Area Across Sectors

Functional Area	High Demand Sectors	Medium Demand Sectors	Low Demand Sectors	Overall Demand
AI & Generative AI	BFSI, IT	Healthcare, Retail	FMCG	Rising
Core Tech & Software Dev	IT, Retail	Healthcare, Automotive	Automotive	Rising
Data Engineering & Science	BFSI, Semiconductor, IT	Healthcare, Manufacturing	FMCG	Rising
Cybersecurity & Privacy	BFSI, Healthcare, IT	Retail, Manufacturing	Retail	Rising
DevOps & SRE	BFSI, IT	Healthcare, Manufacturing	Automotive	Rising
Productivity & Agile	Manufacturing, Healthcare	Retail	FMCG	Rising
Mobile & Web App Dev	Retail, BFSI	Healthcare, Automotive	Semiconductor	Steady
Full Stack Development	IT, Retail	Healthcare, Manufacturing	FMCG	Steady
ERP & CRM Solutions Low-	Healthcare, Retail	Manufacturing	Automotive	Steady
Code / No-Code	Retail, BFSI	Manufacturing, Healthcare	FMCG	Declining

AI and Data Skills Underpin Next-Gen Digital Strategies Across Sectors

AI & Generative AI and Data Engineering & Science continue to see high demand in BFSI, Healthcare, and IT as enterprises advance toward AI-driven decisioning, personalised services, and predictive operations. Manufacturing and Retail are emerging followers, where data modernisation is increasingly tied to competitive advantage.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Note: Demand levels reflect each sector's share of digital hiring by skill: High = >30%, Medium = 15–30%, Low = <15%. 'Low' indicates relatively lower traction, not absence of hiring.

Cross-Sector Demand Signals for Top 10 Functional Areas (continued)

Cybersecurity Demand Intensifies as Sectors Embrace Connected Ecosystems

Cybersecurity hiring is surging across BFSI, Healthcare, and Retail, driven by stricter compliance mandates and rising digital vulnerabilities. Automotive and Manufacturing are also scaling their cybersecurity teams as they expand IoT adoption, connected factory models, and OT-IT integration.

Core Engineering and DevOps Capabilities Remain Sector-Agnostic Enablers

Core Tech & Software Development and DevOps & SRE continue to show consistent high-to-medium demand across industries — reflecting the foundational need for cloud-native platforms, agile engineering, and resilient digital infrastructure in both legacy and high-growth sectors.

Digital Experience Priorities Shape Divergent Demand Curves for App Development

Full Stack Development and Mobile & Web App Development see peak hiring in Retail and BFSI due to their digital customer experience mandates. In contrast, Automotive and Semiconductor sectors prioritise embedded systems and industrial software, resulting in lower demand for front-end app development talent.

ERP, CRM, and Agile Methods See Renewed Traction in Operational Transformation

ERP & CRM Solutions and Productivity & Agile Methods are witnessing steady-to-rising demand across Manufacturing, Retail, and Healthcare. These skills are critical for modernising legacy systems, improving delivery speed, and aligning with evolving operational models and customer expectations.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Note: Demand levels reflect each sector's share of digital hiring by skill: High = >30%, Medium = 15–30%, Low = <15%. 'Low' indicates relatively lower traction, not absence of hiring.

Leadership 2.0: Sector-Wise Transition of CXO Roles in a Digital-First Economy

Sector	Top Leadership Roles	Salary Range (FY2025-26) (in ₹ PA)	Role Evolution	Digital/Tech Skill Anchors
GCCs	Chief AI Officer (CAIO)	₹2 Cr – 2.5 Cr+	Governs GenAI strategy, AI guardrails, and enterprise AI adoption	AI/ML, MLOps, GenAI governance, cloud platforms
	Chief Digital Officer (CDO)	₹45 L – 1.5 Cr+	Leads end-to-end digital transformation across platforms and functions	CX analytics, digital frameworks, platform integration
	Chief Product Officer (CPO)	₹60 L – 1.3 Cr+	Drives AI-led product innovation and customer experience design	AI/UX tools, customer analytics, product intelligence
Tech Sector	Chief Information Officer (CIO)/ Chief Technology Officer (CTO)	₹40 L – 1.2 Cr+	Leads modernization of cloud, cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure	Cloud security, AI frameworks, data platforms
	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	₹30 L – 1 Cr+	Aligns strategy with AI risks, ESG priorities, and digital mandates	AI for strategy, risk, ESG; digital fluency; GenAI impact
	Chief Operations Officer (COO)	₹80 L – 2 Cr+	Orchestrates AI-enabled operations, automation, and delivery efficiency	Supply chain automation, IoT, predictive ops
Non- Tech Sector	Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	₹35 L – 1.2 Cr+	Drives data-driven personalization and AI-led content/CRM automation	Content AI, CRM, personalization tools, Martech
	Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO)	₹50 L – 1.2 Cr+	Leads AI-powered workforce planning, hiring, and talent experience	People analytics, HR tech, AI talent platforms
	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	₹1 Cr – 5 Cr+	Integrates AI for forecasting, fraud detection, and financial analytics	ERP, AI finance tools, risk modeling platforms
	Head of Sales/ Sales Director	₹30 L – 70 L+	Powers AI-based sales enablement, GTM strategies, and CRM intelligence	Sales AI, CRM tools, conversational intelligence

Leadership roles are undergoing a structural reset, as AI adoption redefines the skills, mandates, and compensation benchmarks across sectors

In GCCs, emerging roles like Chief AI Officer and CDO are commanding top-tier salaries (₹2-2.5 Cr) to lead GenAI governance and digital innovation. In the tech sector, traditional roles such as CIO and COO are transitioning to platform orchestration and AI-led operational agility. Meanwhile, non-tech enterprises are embedding AI across functions — with CHROs, CFOs, and CMOs now leveraging analytics and automation to drive business outcomes. This evolution marks a decisive shift from functional oversight to cross-functional AI leadership.

Note: The salary ranges mentioned above are averaged estimates derived from multiple salary portals. Actual compensation may vary significantly depending on factors such as organization size, industry, location, demand for skills, internal company policies etc.

Emerging Digital Skills Among Freshers: FY2025-26 Salary Benchmarks

Sectors	Popular Roles in Demand for Freshers (0-1 yr)	SALARY DISTRIBUTION (₹ LPA) LOWER QUARTILE (P25)	MEDIAN (P50)	UPPER QUARTILE (P75)
Global Capability Centres (GCCs)	AI / GenAI	7.6	8.0	8.4
	Data Science & Analytics	7.8	8.2	8.6
	Cybersecurity	7.1	7.5	7.9
	Cloud Platforms (AWS / Azure / GCP)	6.5	6.9	7.2
	DevOps & SRE	6.2	6.7	7.0
IT Products & Services	Data Engineering	5.6	6.0	6.4
	Full Stack Development	5.2	5.7	6.0
	UI/UX Design	4.3	4.7	5.0
	RPA / Automation	4.3	4.7	5.0
	Software Development (Java / Python)	5.2	5.7	6.0
	Cloud Support & Services	4.0	4.3	4.5
Non-Tech Industry	Business Intelligence (BI Tools)	4.3	4.7	5.0
	Digital Marketing Tech (SEO / SEM / MarTech)	3.8	4.2	4.5
	ERP Tools (SAP / Oracle)	3.8	4.2	4.5

Fresher hiring in India for **FY2025-26** looks largely optimistic, with a surge in demand for new graduates. This trend is driven by the **growing emphasis on practical, job-ready skills**, particularly in emerging technologies **like AI, cloud computing, data analytics, and network security**. Employers are actively seeking candidates who possess these specific competencies alongside essential soft skills such as critical thinking and communication, **signaling a shift away from traditional degree-centric hiring**.

India's freshers are entering the workforce with sharper digital skills and higher market value

Across GCCs, IT, and non-tech sectors, **AI/GenAI, Data Science, Cybersecurity, and Cloud** have emerged as the most sought-after skills among freshers — commanding starting salaries of **₹7–8.5 LPA,** a clear step-up from pre-pandemic norms.
This signals a **positive market shift** — India's entry-level talent pool is rapidly adapting to **next-gen digital demands**, positioning itself as a critical enabler of the nation's evolving digital economy.

The digital talent pipeline is deepening beyond traditional tech hubs

Notably, **skills-first hiring** is expanding across **Tier-2/3 cities and non-tech industries** — with freshers in Business Intelligence, Digital Marketing Tech, and ERP domains earning **₹ 4–5 LPA** in sectors like BFSI, healthcare, and manufacturing.
This broadening of opportunities reflects a **healthy democratization of India's digital workforce**, offering new career pathways and **sustainable optimism** for the next generation of professionals.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, of which 12% were freshers data.

City-Based Talent Premiums: Key Insights for Workforce Planning

Average Salaries in Cities (in ₹ LPA)

Top Functional Areas	Bengaluru	Mumbai	Delhi	Chennai	Hyderabad	Kolkata	Gurgaon	Pune	Ahmedabad	Kochi	Chandigarh	Coimbatore	Jaipur	Indore
AI & Generative AI	12.7	12.5	12.2	11.9	12	11	11.7	12.2	10.3	10	10.1	10	9.9	9.7
DevOps & Site Reliability Engineering	12.2	12.3	11	11.2	11.4	10.4	10.9	11.7	9.7	9.2	9.5	9.2	9.3	9.1
Full Stack Development	11.9	11.6	10.5	10.9	11.2	10.1	10.7	11.4	9.3	8.7	9.4	9.2	8.9	9
ERP & CRM Solutions	11.5	11.2	9.4	9.8	10.8	9.6	10.2	11	7.9	7.5	8.7	7.7	7.6	7.4
Cybersecurity & Privacy	10.5	10.7	10.2	10.1	10.3	9.4	9.7	10.1	7.7	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.2	7
Robotic Process Automation	10.3	10.5	9.4	9.9	9.3	8.5	8.9	9.6	7.2	6.8	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.6
IoT & Embedded Systems	10.1	9.9	9.4	9.3	9.5	8.3	8.6	9.2	7.1	6.2	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.1
Core Tech & Software Development	9.9	9.7	9.2	9	9.3	8.1	8.7	9.5	6.7	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.1	5.9
ETL (Extract Transform Load)	9.6	9.4	9	8.8	9.2	7.8	8.3	9.1	6.5	6.1	6.4	6.2	6	5.9
Backend & API Development	9.1	8.7	8.5	8.2	8.3	7.3	7.9	8.5	5.9	5.8	6	6.1	5.5	5.3

Metro cities — especially Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Hyderabad — dominate the salary landscape for frontier tech roles like AI, DevOps, and Full Stack Development, commanding **₹11.5–12.7 LPA**. Pune and Gurgaon are closing in, signaling their emergence as Tier-1 equivalents for premium digital roles. Meanwhile, Tier-2 cities (e.g., Indore, Coimbatore) show cost arbitrage of **up to 40%**, making them viable for distributed delivery in backend, ETL, and RPA functions.

Salary bands reflect talent demand and functional role

Salary

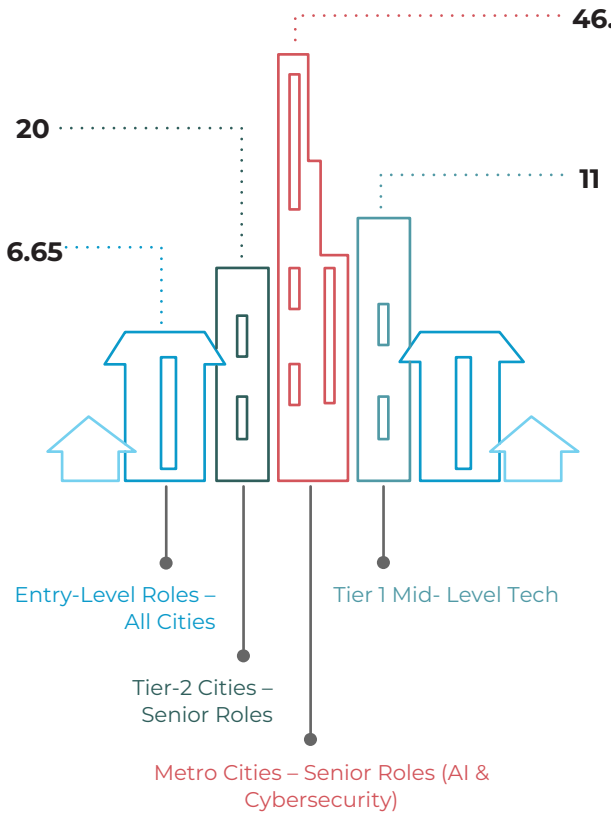
Metro-Led Zones	Highest salary bands for innovation talent
Tier-1 Equivalents	Salary parity in AI & CRM functions
Tier-2 Cities	Strategic hubs for distributed delivery

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

City-Based Talent Premiums: Key Insights for Workforce Planning (continued)

Functional Areas	Metro (in ₹ LPA)			Tier 1 (in ₹ LPA)			Tier 2 (in ₹ LPA)		
	Entry	Mid	Senior	Entry	Mid	Senior	Entry	Mid	Senior
AI & Generative AI	7.8	12.1	48	7	12.1	46.5	6.2	10.2	38
DevOps & Site Reliability Engineering	7.3	11.4	42	6.4	11.6	37.8	5.5	9.6	32
Full Stack Development	6.8	11	37	5.9	11.3	35.1	4.7	9.3	28
ERP & CRM Solutions	6.2	10.3	34	6	10.9	32.7	4.1	8.1	21
Cybersecurity & Privacy	7.5	10.2	45	6.6	10.2	39.5	5.3	7.7	35
Robotic Process Automation	6	9.7	30	5.3	9.5	28.9	3.9	7.2	20
IoT & Embedded Systems	6.5	9.4	32	5.7	9.4	30.7	4.4	6.8	21.5
Core Tech & Software Development	6.3	9.2	35	5.5	9.4	32.1	4.2	6.7	22.5
ETL (Extract Transform Load)	5.8	8.9	29	5.1	9.2	27.9	3.7	6.5	18.5
Backend & API Development	5.7	8.4	31	4.9	8.4	26.3	3.5	6.1	20

Salary Premiums by City Tier and Experience Level

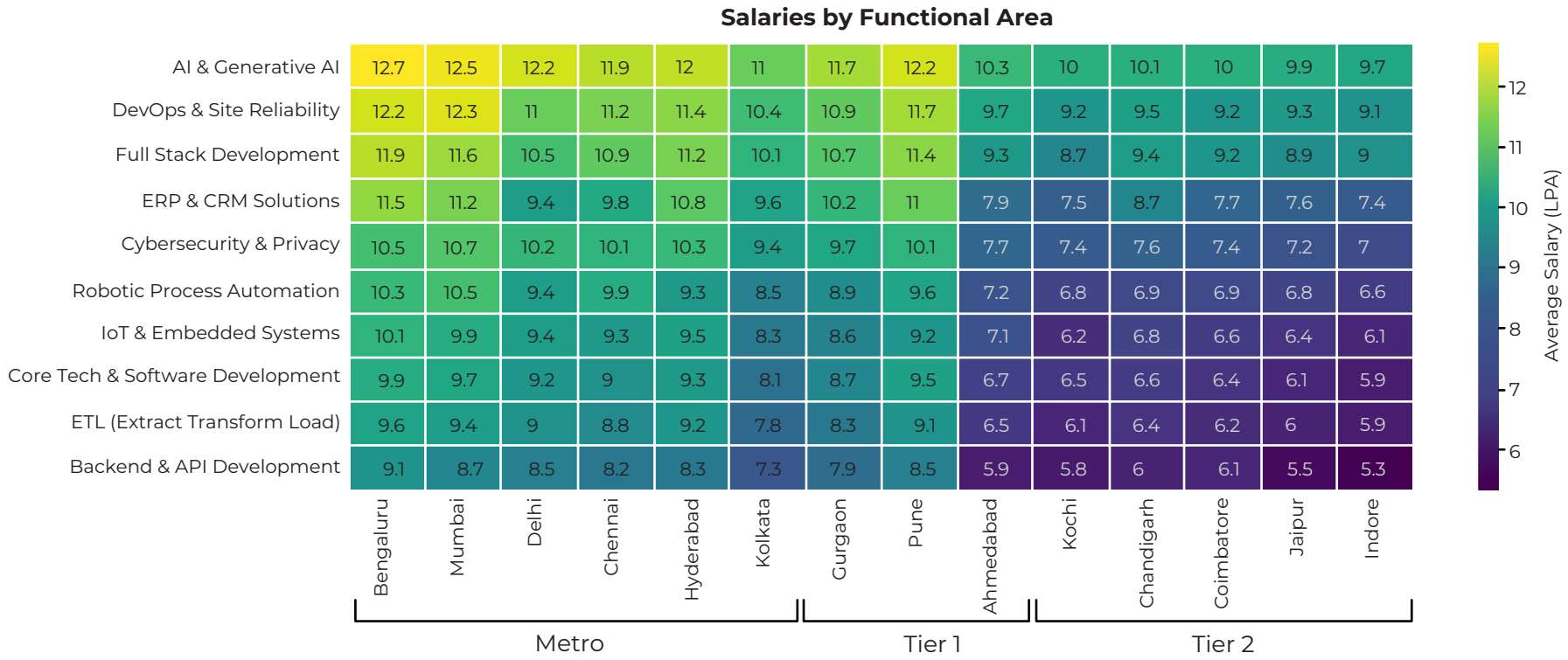


Seniority amplifies city-tier disparities. Metro cities, especially in AI and Cybersecurity roles, lead senior-level salaries with **₹45–48 LPA**, reflecting their premium for innovation-critical roles. Tier 1 cities hold competitive mid-level salaries (**₹10-12 LPA**), while Tier 2 hubs remain **20–30%** lower at senior levels, making them ideal for scaled delivery. Entry-level salaries remain uniform (**~₹5.5 -7.8 LPA**), indicating fresher pay parity across tiers.

- Premium salaries for innovation-critical tech talent in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad
- Cost-effective senior hiring in cities like Coimbatore, Indore, Jaipur
- Competitive pay for mid-career professionals in cities like Pune and other growing Tier 1 categories, reflecting expanding market opportunities
- Uniform fresher salaries across Metro, Tier-1, and Tier-2 locations

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

City-Skill Salary HeatMap: Mapping Talent Value Across Urban India



Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad command the highest salaries across most tech functions.

AI, DevOps, Full Stack roles lead metro salary bands, averaging **₹11.5–12.7 LPA**.

Pune and Gurgaon show Tier-1 salary parity in mid-level cybersecurity and backend roles.

Tier-2 cities like Indore, Kochi reflect sharp drops in backend & RPA roles (**as low as ₹5.3–6.6 LPA**).

Widening salary spread between metros and Tier-2 suggests deepening specialization by city-function clusters.

Note: Color intensity reflects average salary (₹ LPA) —Lighter yellow = higher salary; darker purple = lower salary across city-function pairs..
Data represents average salaries for FY2025–26

Top Non-Tech Specialized Job Roles for FY2025-26

Top 10 Job Role	Key Skills	Entry (₹ LPA)	Mid (₹ LPA)	Senior (₹ LPA)
Program Manager (Non-Tech)	Project management, Stakeholder communication, Budgeting	8	16	38.7
Brand Manager	Market research, Branding strategy, Campaign planning	7.5	15	33.4
Environmental Health & Safety Manager	Workplace safety, Compliance audit, Risk assessment	6.3	11.5	22.3
Finance Consultant	Financial analysis, Budget planning, Tax strategy, MIS Reporting	6	12	21.9
Business Analyst	Business process modeling, Reporting, Excel, PowerPoint	6.5	12	20
Compliance Officer	Regulatory compliance, Auditing, Risk management	5.5	10	18
Procurement Specialist	Vendor management, Negotiation, Purchase order processing	6	10	18
Digital Marketing Specialist	SEO/SEM, Campaign management, Content marketing	4.5	10	17
Content Strategist	Content planning, Copywriting, Brand storytelling	5.5	9	17
Human Resources Specialist	Recruitment, Employee relations, Policy implementation	5	9	15

- Non-technical roles such as Program Manager, Brand Manager, Finance Consultant, and EHS Manager offer salaries comparable to senior-level tech roles ranging from **₹15-38 LPA**, reflecting their growing strategic and operational importance.

- Roles like Business Analyst, Compliance Officer, and Procurement Specialist show steady demand with salaries progressing from **₹5–6 LPA** at entry level to **₹18–22 LPA** at senior levels driven by their contribution to decision-making, regulatory alignment, and operational efficiency.

- These roles combine domain knowledge with strong soft skills such as stakeholder management, decision-making, and communication, which remain less susceptible to automation and continue to drive long-term career relevance.

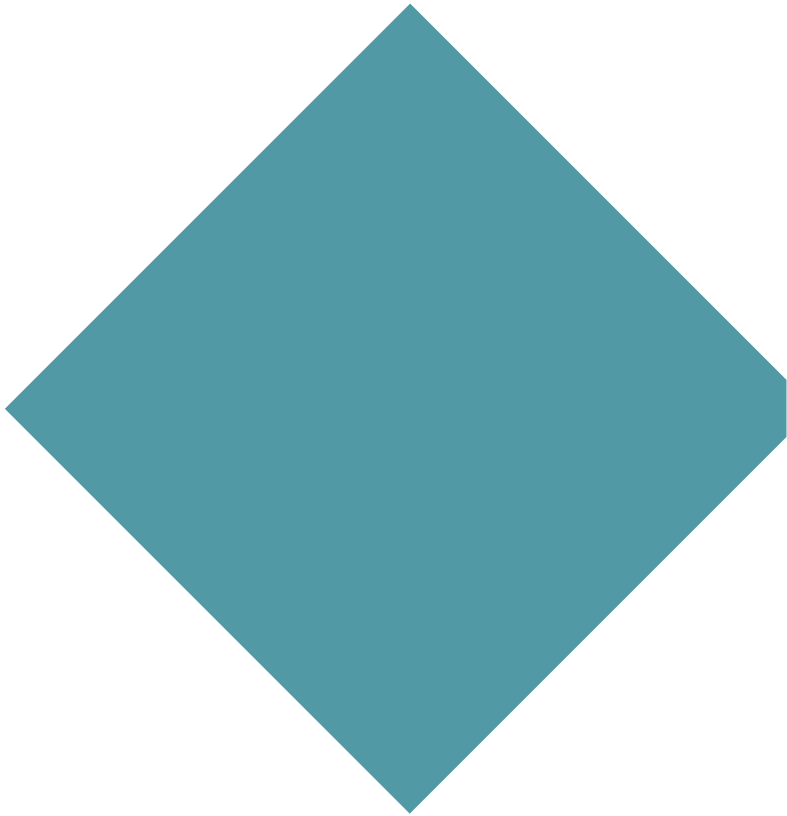
The Capability Chronicles

Aligning Skills with Evolving Market Demands

Aligning Digital Skills with Market Demands: Key Shifts Across Roles

Demand vs. Automation Risk

Top 15 Job Roles	Automation Risk	Demand Trend (FY2025-26)
GenAI Engineer, NLP Specialist, ML Ops	Very Low	Rising
Cloud Architect, Infrastructure Engineer	Low	Rising
Cybersecurity Analyst, SOC Specialist	Low	Rising
Data Engineer, Data Scientist	Low	Rising
DevOps Engineer, Site Reliability Engineer	Low	Rising
AR/VR Developer, XR Engineer	Very Low	Steady
UX/UI Designer	Medium	Steady
IoT Engineer, Embedded Systems Developer	Medium	Steady
Full Stack Developer	Medium	Steady
BI Analyst, Data Visualization Specialist	Medium-High	Steady
RPA Developer, Process Automation Engineer	Medium	Steady
Backend Developer, API Developer	Medium	Steady
Mobile App Developer, Web Developer	Medium-High	Declining
ERP Consultant, CRM Specialist	High	Declining
ITSM Specialist, IT Operations Analyst	Very High	Declining



Very Low: *Very low automation probability; needs creativity or human judgment;*
Low: *Low probability; tools assist but human input is key;*
Medium: *Moderate probability routine tasks may be automated;*
Medium-High: *High probability; many functions are automatable;*
High: *Very high probability; mostly rule-based tasks;*
Very High: *Extremely high probability; role is likely to be automated.*

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Aligning Digital Skills with Market Demands: Key Shifts Across Roles (continued)

AI capability demand is outpacing talent supply

While enterprises are scaling **GenAI** and **ML Ops** adoption, acute talent shortages are emerging in these domains — creating a new premium for cross-functional AI engineering and operations talent that can drive enterprise-grade AI integration.

Cloud, Cybersecurity, and Data skills remain the foundation of digital competitiveness

Cloud Architects, Cybersecurity Analysts, and **Data Engineers** are experiencing sustained demand growth — as enterprises align their capability roadmaps with cloud-native, secure, and data-driven operating models. These skills are both high-demand and structurally defensible.

Emerging tech and design roles signal evolving capability expectations

AR/VR Engineers and **UX/UI Designers** are seeing growing demand as industries invest in immersive experiences and differentiated digital products. These roles reflect the increasing alignment of technology capabilities with customer-centric and experiential value drivers.

Core software roles are stabilising amid technology abstraction

Full Stack Developers and **Backend Developers** are now entering a stable demand phase — as low-code platforms, cloud-native abstractions, and API-first architectures reshape how digital products are engineered. This signals a shift in capability investment away from generalist software profiles.

Legacy IT and transactional roles face alignment risk

ERP Consultants, ITSM Specialists, and **Mobile/Web Developers** show declining demand — as automation, cloud SaaS, and AI-driven operations displace legacy technology footprints. Organisations must prioritise reskilling and realignment to mitigate capability obsolescence in these areas.

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Employer Expectations vs. Employee Readiness: The Skills Gap Challenge

Top Skill Areas	What Employers Expect	What Talent Offers	Readiness Gap	Estimated % Gap / Demand Delta
AI & Machine Learning	Enterprise-scale GenAI deployment, ML Ops pipelines, model governance, vector database integration	Academic ML knowledge, basic prompt engineering, limited production-grade GenAI experience	**Critical Gap** – **~1M** professionals needed by 2026, **~400–450K** currently available	**~60%** gap (only 400–450K talent available)
Cybersecurity	Zero trust architecture, cloud-native security, AI-driven threat detection, SOC 2 / ISO 27001 integration	Perimeter-based security mindset, limited cloud and AI-based defense exposure	**Severe Gap** – **~25–30%** supply deficit; 50K+ mid-to-senior cyber positions open	**~30%** talent shortage in mid–senior roles
Data Science & Analytics	Streaming data processing (Kafka, Flink), real-time AI/BI integration, data mesh architecture, decision intelligence	Batch processing focus, dashboard-level analytics, limited familiarity with AI-integrated data products	**Moderate Gap** – Demand outpacing supply by **~35–40%**	**~35–40%** gap in real-time/AI-enabled analytics
Cloud Computing	Multi-cloud architecture (AWS/GCP/Azure), Kubernetes-native DevSecOps, IaC (Terraform), FinOps alignment	Basic cloud certifications, monolithic migration experience, limited DevOps/FinOps integration	**Critical Gap** – **~1.5–2M** professionals needed across all cloud roles by FY2024-25	**~55–60%** demand-supply mismatch
Full Stack Development	Event-driven microservices, AI-assisted development (GitHub Copilot, Vertex AI), serverless computing, API-first design	MVC monoliths, limited microservices exposure, no AI tooling integration experience	**Growing Gap** – Full Stack role demand plateauing; increasing shift toward cloud-native and AI-driven engineering	**~30–35%** skill lag in AI-driven full stack roles
Product Management	AI-first product strategy, data-informed roadmaping, continuous discovery, OKR-based agile delivery	Feature-driven PM, waterfall mindset, weak data-to-decision loop, limited AI integration know-how	**Moderate Gap** – Employer-reported **~40%** skill mismatch in AI/data-enabled PM roles	**~40%** mismatch in AI-integrated PM skills
UX/UI Design	AI-driven UX (personalisation engines), multimodal interaction design (voice/gesture/AR), design ops, accessibility-by-design	Visual-centric design, limited AI-aware design, minimal exposure to voice/AR interaction patterns	**Moderate Gap** – Skill upgrades needed for AI-first design	**~25–30%** capability delta in AI-infused UX design
DevOps & SRE	Site Reliability Engineering (SLO/SLI/SLA), GitOps, policy-as-code, AI-driven observability (AIOps)	Traditional CI/CD pipelines, reactive incident management, manual release processes	**Moderate Gap** – **~20%** YoY demand growth requiring advanced upskilling	**~20%** annual upskilling required

Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Note: The percentages in the "Estimated % Gap / Demand Delta" column represent the approximate shortfall between current talent availability and enterprise-level demand for FY2025–26. These are directional estimates based on internal workforce supply-demand analysis and industry hiring benchmarks. Values indicate the proportion of unmet demand, not the total market size.

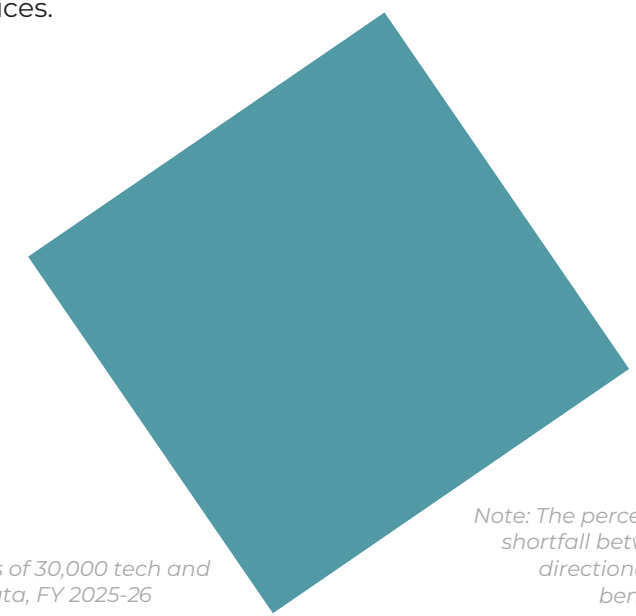
Employer Expectations vs. Employee Readiness: The Skills Gap Challenge (continued)

AI, Cloud, and Cybersecurity roles face critical capability gaps

Enterprises report severe talent shortages in **GenAI, Cloud-native architectures,** and **advanced Cybersecurity** — with current skill supply lagging enterprise demand by **25–40%** across these domains.

Product, UX, and engineering talent requires significant upskilling

Legacy paradigms persist in **Product Management, UX/UI**, and **Full Stack engineering** — with employers citing **~40% skill mismatches** in AI-integrated product delivery and a growing need for SRE and AI-driven engineering practices.



Data Source: Derived from an analysis of 30,000 tech and digital roles, TeamLease Employee Data, FY 2025-26

Note: The percentages in the "Estimated % Gap / Demand Delta" column represent the approximate shortfall between current talent availability and enterprise-level demand for FY2025–26. These are directional estimates based on internal workforce supply-demand analysis and industry hiring benchmarks. Values indicate the proportion of unmet demand, not the total market size.

Leadership Perspective

Bridging the Skills Gap

AI Adoption Begins with Everyday Actions, Not Grand Strategies

Ravi Maney,
Senior Leader from the GCC industry

AI adoption begins with everyday actions—not grand strategies.
It doesn't need to start with advanced tools or complex job roles. Even simple tasks like writing emails or reviewing documents can serve as a gateway. When employees use AI in their own context, adoption feels intuitive—not forced. The organization's role is to normalize AI usage across functions, making it part of daily routines.

Reskilling is non-negotiable.
Every role—whether coding, managing projects, or analyzing data—will increasingly involve AI. For mid-career professionals, this is a moment to step up, not just adapt. With the right mindset and a willingness to unlearn and relearn, they can lead change by aligning their domain understanding with AI capabilities.

Freshers bring native digital fluency, already using AI tools in daily life. With structured training, their transition to professional AI usage is smooth. However, future-readiness goes beyond tools—it requires organizations to build AI into their structure, not bolt it on. Pilot projects, experiments, and hands-on learning should become the norm.

The real momentum begins when AI becomes habitual.
Clarity doesn't precede adoption—it follows it. The more consistently organizations build with AI, the more visible and natural the opportunities become. As Ravi puts it: "Don't wait for clarity—build your way into it."

> "Don't wait for clarity—build your way into it."

Bridging the AI-Business Divide: A Leadership View on Workforce Transformation

Jinya Suzuki,
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer,
MUFG Global Service Private Limited

AI's progress is undeniable—but context is everything.
While many professionals are skilled in using AI tools, they often lack the domain knowledge to apply them meaningfully in financial services. Bridging this AI-business gap is crucial. As industry exposure deepens, the alignment between technical capabilities and strategic outcomes will improve—this disconnect is temporary.

At MUFG, we've prioritized proactive workforce transformation. Rather than waiting for AI to force change, we've guided employees into more analytical and consultative roles. This hasn't meant job loss—instead, AI has freed talent for more valuable work. For mid-career professionals, cross-functional skills that blend tech fluency with business understanding are proving most future-ready.

Fresh talent is fueling innovation.
Free from legacy mindsets, they're
more willing to experiment, challenge inefficiencies, and explore how AI can be applied creatively. They've become important drivers of our transformation efforts.

But innovation must be intentional.
We focus on small proof-of-concepts, balancing bold ideas with strong governance. Especially in regulated sectors, transformation must be responsible, with accountability built into every step.

"Innovation must be bold in vision but grounded in accountability."

The Future Belongs to the Knowledge-Rich, Not the Role-Rich

Insights from a
Head of Service Delivery Management
in the GCC Industry

Tech is moving faster than talent systems can adapt.
While we're producing plenty of graduates, many are still not job-ready. There's a major disconnect between what academia delivers and what the industry demands. But even within organizations, reacting to AI like it's a passing trend is a mistake. Continuous learning must become embedded in the culture, across all age groups. The key is not blind trust in Artificial Intelligence (AI) or GenAI, but contextual understanding and responsible adoption.

Jobs won't vanish—but they'll be reinvented.
Future roles will demand functional depth or the ability to build and apply tech within specific domains. SOP-driven roles are fading, and age isn't a barrier anymore—mental adaptability is. Professionals must contribute with high-value expertise, not just manage. The future workforce will be flatter and more knowledge-driven.

Freshers bring agility, but need context.
Though quick with tech, they often lack functional grounding. Most institutions don't equip them for real-world application, so companies must step in. Entry-level coding alone won't hold long-term value. Instead, their strength lies in understanding how to apply code meaningfully within domain environments.

Cultural shift is the real challenge.
The most valued professionals will be those combining technical fluency with business insight. Organizations must foster experimentation—incubate, prototype, test, and learn—before scaling. Above all, don't just adopt tech. Build a mindset that's ready for it.

> "Those who don't evolve will go the forgotten way—not because they lacked tech, but because they couldn't shift their culture in time."

Shaping Tomorrow's Digital Workforce Today

Head HR,
Products Engineering Services & Solutions Company

AI's impact on digital skills varies by domain.
In areas like engineering, core conceptual thinking will still require human input, even if many design tasks become automated. The current limitation isn't AI's capability—it's how well it's integrated with real-world domain expertise.

A clear generational skill gap exists.
Younger professionals are tech-savvy but often lack patience, resilience, and soft skills. Older professionals remain relevant if they are mentally adaptable and willing to learn. Mid-level professionals, especially, must continuously upskill and bring unique value beyond routine execution.

Freshers bring digital awareness but need structured mentoring.
They often lack emotional maturity and exposure to real-world settings. Organizations must coach them beyond tools—focusing on applying skills effectively and building judgment.

True transformation demands cultural change.
Hiring should focus on learning potential and adaptability, not degrees or polished English. Companies must nurture both the technical and emotional growth of talent.

"How much AI to be used is like salt in food, it depends on the dish."

Balancing Tech with Trust: Rethinking Talent in an AI-Driven HR World

Kartik Raghupathy,
Head – Total Rewards & People Operations
Rupeek

AI tools are only effective when used with intent.
Many people apply them to tasks they already understand, instead of using them to solve gaps in knowledge or efficiency. That's where real value lies—not in routine automation, but in purposeful application that saves time and adds clarity.

Tool adoption must be user-aligned.
A great tool on paper may fail in practice if it's not built with real workflows in mind. The problem isn't the tech—it's when the tool solves a developer's problem, not the users. What's needed is flexibility and customization, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Human judgment and empathy still matter.
Systems can automate forms or processes, but they can't listen or care. HR needs to show understanding, especially in candidate handling and internal engagement. Tools should support that, not replace it—because trust is built through conversation, not computation.

Learning mindset matters more than prior experience.
Freshers are hired not for what they've done, but for their logic, intent, and willingness to grow. Interns are trained and tracked with clear learning goals. Promotions aren't given for repeating last year's work—they're tied to new contributions and self-driven upskilling.

> "Systems can respond, but they can't listen. In HR, empathy still drives value—AI should support, not replace, the human touch."

Beyond Automation: Rethinking Readiness in the Age of AI and Human Co-Work

Sanyogita Sharma,
Head – People & Culture (P&C Org)
Embitel Technologies

AI talent is scarce—and hiring depends on where you stand in the AI curve.
If an organization is ahead of the curve, it must build in-house capability because the market supply is still catching up. Targeting talent from AI-mature universities or peer companies can help, but readiness remains uneven across geographies and ecosystems.

Workforce transformation must start with the right roles.
Around 20% of transactional and repetitive work can already be automated, freeing up bandwidth for learning. But this shift also creates responsibility—organizations must guide employees to use AI productively, not passively. Without that structure, idle time can become a threat rather than an opportunity.

Mid-level talent needs nuanced upskilling.
Junior mid-level professionals face the biggest challenge—they're too senior to be reskilled from scratch but not mature enough to lead hybrid teams. Upskilling here must combine AI fluency with people management and team dynamics. Senior mid-levels, on the other hand, can serve as anchors if empowered with the right tools and leadership support.

Entry-level talent must learn more than just tech.
Today's freshers know the tools—but not the compliance, data sensitivity, or real-world problem framing. AI can't be a shortcut to learning. Organizations must track how freshers grow across multiple dimensions—from critical thinking to problem selection—so they don't just generate answers but also understand the questions worth solving.

> "AI can free up time—but what people do with that time will define whether they grow or get replaced."

Career Trajectories & Salary Progressions in the AI Era

Career Transitions Between Tech and Non-Tech Roles

Transition Path	Avg. Upskilling Time	Typical Salary Gain (%)	From → To Role Examples
Non-Tech → Tech (via upskilling)	9–12 months	35–50%	Operations Associate → Data Analyst Customer Service Rep → QA Tester Accounts Executive → Junior BI Analyst
Tech → Product / Strategy	4–6 months	Neutral to +10%	Backend Developer → Product Manager QA Lead → Technical Program Manager DevOps Engineer → Platform Strategy Analyst
Non-Tech → Digital / AI-Driven Marketing	6–9 months	20–25%	Sales Associate → Digital Campaign Analyst Content Writer → SEO/MarTech Specialist Event Marketer → Performance Marketing Analyst
Tech → AI Ops / AI Product Roles	6–9 months	25–35%	System Admin → AI Ops Engineer ML Engineer → AI Product Owner Full Stack Dev → LLM Product Manager
Tech → Data Science / ML	6–12 months	30–45%	Backend Engineer → Data Scientist ETL Developer → ML Engineer App Dev → AI Research Associate
Non-Tech → No-Code / Citizen Tech Roles	3–6 months	15–30%	HR Exec → Workflow Automation Analyst Admin Staff → AppSheet/PowerApps Builder MIS Coordinator → Dashboard Creator
Business Analyst → GenAI Prompt Designer	3–5 months	10–20%	BA → Prompt Engineer (GenAI Content/UX) Pre-sales Consultant → AI Use Case Modeler
Designer → AI-Enhanced Creative Roles	4–6 months	20–30%	Graphic Designer → AI Image Prompt Specialist Video Editor → AI Content Generator UX Writer → Conversational UX Designer
Support/Operations → AI Support Automation	6–9 months	20–30%	Customer Support Agent → AI Bot Trainer Operations Analyst → Workflow AI Coordinator

Note: Indicative transition gains. Outcomes vary by destination domain (BFSI/regulated often > healthcare > retail/services), function maturity, employer bands, city, seniority, and skills; baseline is the starting-role median in the same city/level.

The AI impact curve: Job displacement vs. new opportunities

AI adoption is shifting role demand — while **transactional and routine roles** face gradual displacement, **new demand surges** in **AI/ML, Data Science, AI Ops,** and **AI product roles** are creating net new career pathways across sectors.

3 Types of AI-Era Career Transitions

AI-Augmented Roles

- Traditional roles enhanced by GenAI or automation tools.
- Requires: Tool adoption, prompting, creativity with AI.
- Example:
  - UX Writer → Conversational UX Designer
  - Designer → AI Image Generator

AI-Adjacent Roles

- Domain experts + AI tools = cross-functional edge.
- Requires: No-code tools, orchestration, business + AI fluency.
- Example:
  - HR → AI-Powered PeopleOps
  - Ops Analyst → AI Workflow Designer

AI-Native Roles

- New-age roles built entirely around AI models & systems.
- Require: ML knowledge,prompt design, agent logic.
- Example:
  - SoftwareEngineer→ LLM Ops Engineer
  - BA → Gen AI Context Engineer

Conclusion & Recommendations

Charting India's Digital Talent Evolution

- India's workforce is undergoing an accelerated transformation, shaped by AI-first adoption, an expanding digital economy, and India's global leadership in GCC innovation. AI/GenAI, Cloud-native engineering, Data Engineering, and Cybersecurity have emerged as the most sought-after capabilities, driving sharp salary premiums and shaping new talent value chains. As **GCCs** evolve into deep-tech innovation hubs, **IT Products & Services** firms are pivoting toward AI-integrated product development, while **non-tech industries** are rapidly digitizing core business models — all fueling a rising demand for cross-sector digital talent.

- Yet this dynamic growth exposes key challenges: significant skills gaps in AI and Cloud domains, persistent leadership diversity constraints, and readiness mismatches between employer expectations and current workforce capabilities. Legacy IT and transactional roles face gradual obsolescence, underscoring the urgency for reskilling and career mobility. Simultaneously, AI-era salary gains and emerging career transitions — from Non-Tech to AI-driven domains — are redefining workforce aspirations, lifestyle priorities, and leadership expectations.

- A continuous learning mindset will be central to navigating this evolving landscape. Building AI literacy, leadership agility, and cross-functional adaptability is now imperative for professionals to stay competitive and future-ready. As India's digital economy scales toward new frontiers, proactive skilling, career agility, and aspirational leadership will enable both talent and enterprises to thrive in an increasingly global and innovation-driven market.

How Professionals Can Stay Future-Ready in India's Evolving Digital Workforce

AI, Cloud, and Cybersecurity roles face critical capability gaps

Invest in upskilling in high-demand areas — *AI/GenAI, Cloud-native engineering, Data Engineering, and Cybersecurity* — where talent shortages are driving premium salaries and strong cross-sector demand.

Embrace Career Transitions Toward AI-driven Roles

Proactively explore transitions into *AI Ops, AI-integrated Product Management, and Data Science* — where career mobility and >35% salary uplifts are emerging. Leverage short upskilling pathways (6–9 months) to pivot into future-ready roles.

Target Leadership Readiness & Cross-functional Agility

Develop leadership competencies early — particularly in *AI-integrated product delivery, cloud-native platforms, and AI-first decisioning*. Build cross-functional agility to stay competitive in evolving enterprise environments.

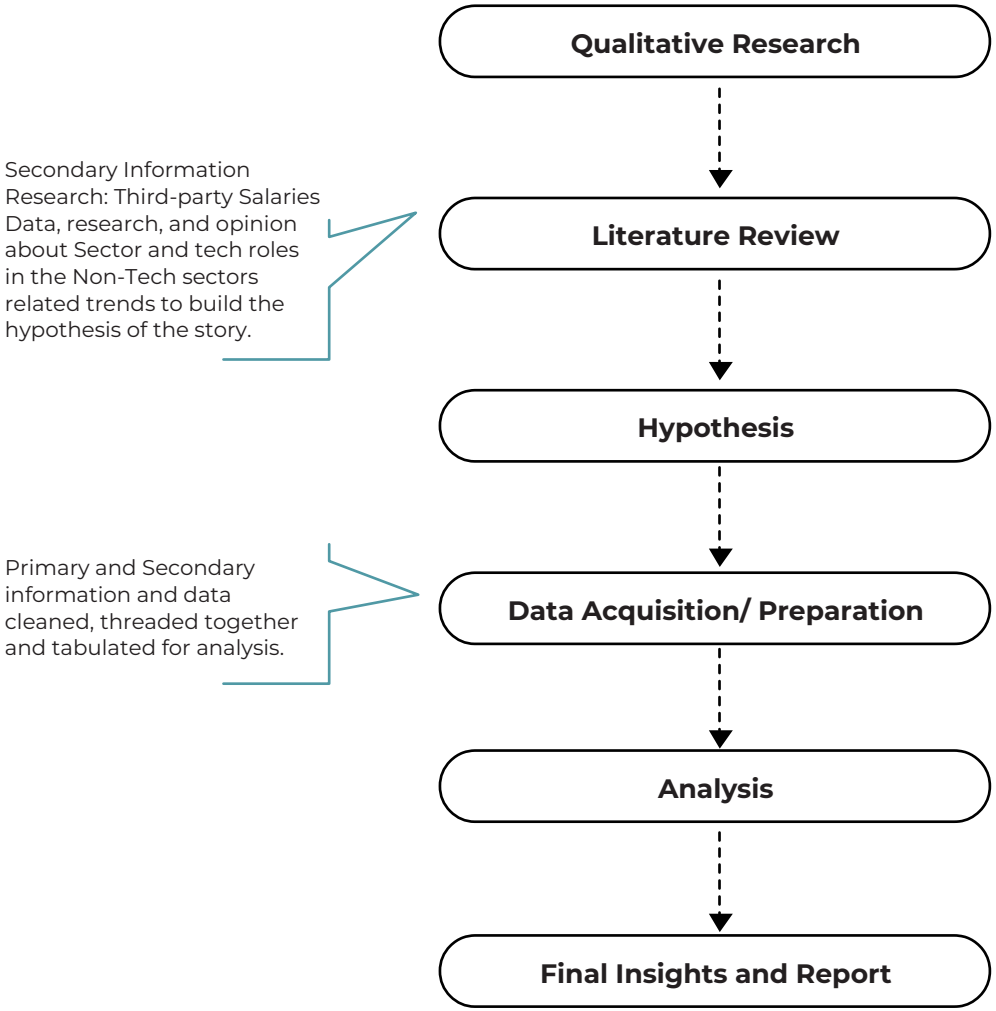
Leverage Opportunities Beyond Tier-1 Hubs

Explore career opportunities in *Tier-2/3 cities and GCC-driven hubs* — where distributed workforce models are creating new pathways for digital professionals, with growing salary parity and aspirational lifestyle gains.

Annexure

Data Interpretation,
Methodology Overview,
Sample Design and Bibliography

Methodology Overview and Sample Design



Report Timeline: FY2024-25 to FY2025-26

Definition of different Hierarchical Levels

Entry level

0-3 years of experience

Mid-Level

3-8 years of experience

Senior Level

Above 8 years of experience

Research Note:

1. A total of 30,000 salaries were analyzed across various technology job roles, skills, and functions, categorized by experience level, location, and industry sectors.
2. Salary figures were derived by calculating the median compensation for each role, skill, or function within the corresponding experience level, after excluding approximately 2% duplicate entries to ensure data accuracy. These figures were also compared with secondary research data to verify alignment with market salary standards.
3. The distribution of the sample across experience levels was: Entry (0–3 yrs) –28%, Junior (3–5 yrs) – 25%, Mid (5–8 yrs) – 33%, and Senior (8+ yrs) – 14%

Note: Metro, Tier-1, and Tier-2 city definitions are established per the report's standards and align with the salary heatmap classification system for consistent data analysis.

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