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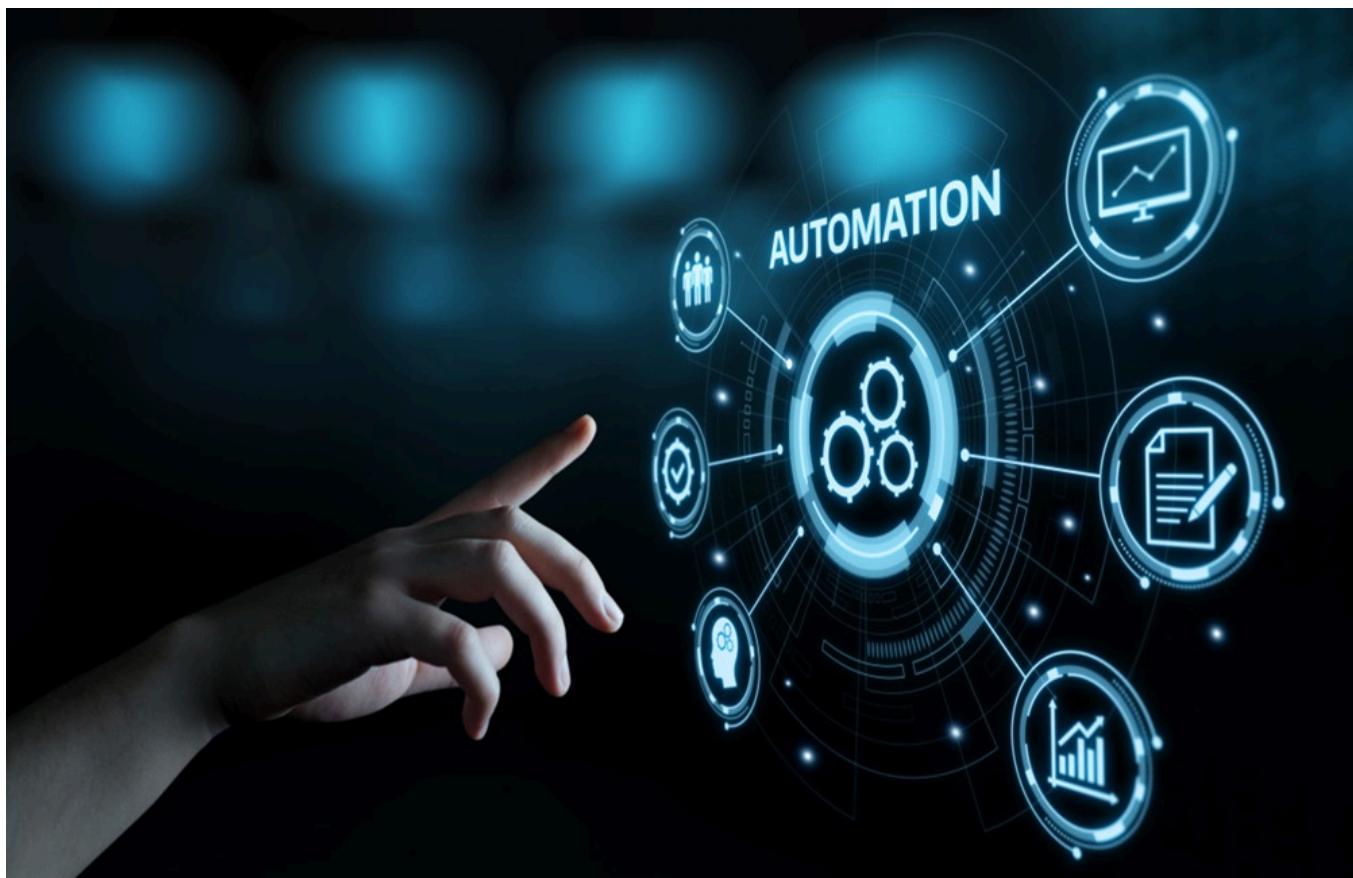
Balancing automation with workforce reskilling at APAR

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Representational Image

Technology with a human-first mindset

At the core of our operations lies a robust synergy of physical assets, cutting-edge technologies, state-of-the-art facilities, and human capital. This foundation powers our value creation model by driving operational efficiency, sparking innovation, enhancing product quality, and consistently meeting customer expectations for sustainable growth. Advanced tools like IoT, AI, digital transformation, and supply chain automation optimise asset utilisation while empowering our workforce. Workforce Reskilling at APAR ensures employees master these technologies, turning automation into a catalyst for career growth

integrity, and accelerated progress toward operational excellence through strategic digitisation.

Clarity of purpose

In a manufacturing-led business like APAR, automation and digital transformation are no longer optional; they are fundamental to staying competitive, improving safety, and meeting demanding customer timelines. The real question is not whether to automate, but how to integrate technology in a way that strengthens the workforce. That balance depends on three pillars: transparent intent, structured reskilling, and co-creation with frontline teams.

Leadership must consistently explain why specific processes are being digitised, what types of new roles will emerge, and how existing employees will be supported to transition into them.

Structured reskilling system

A second pillar is designing reskilling as an ongoing system rather than a one-time training drive. In practice, this means mapping roles into three categories: tasks that will be heavily automated, tasks that will be augmented by digital tools, and tasks that remain deeply human-centric. For each category, learning pathways can be created.

The most effective programs combine classroom or e-learning modules with hands-on exposure on the shop floor. Peer trainers and "digital champions" within each unit help translate abstract concepts into plant realities, breaking down resistance. Over time, these champions become the bridge between IT, operations, and HR.

Co-Creation with Frontline teams

The third pillar is designing transformation with, not for, the workforce. When automation projects are conceived only in boardrooms or IT offices, they often miss practical nuances and fuel anxiety. Involving operators, supervisors, and

digital solution itself. Second, it signals respect: employees see that their insights and lived experience are shaping the tools they will eventually use.

There is also a need to be honest about transitions. Not every existing role will map neatly into a new one. In such cases, responsible organisations plan for redeployment, upskilling into adjacent functions, or, in some instances, dignified exit paths with support. A transparent, data-backed view of future skills and roles, shared periodically, helps individuals take ownership of their development.

Measuring sustainable balance

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Measurement is another critical aspect of balance. If automation success is tracked only through metrics like cost reduction or cycle-time improvement, people-development efforts will always remain secondary. Balanced scorecards that include indicators such as training completion, internal mobility, adoption rates of new tools, and employee sentiment give a more realistic view of whether the transformation is sustainable. Feedback from both formal surveys and informal dialogue should be used to iterate on training content and refine digital tools.

In a sector where technology will keep evolving, "future-proofing" has less to do with predicting the next tool and more to do with building adaptability, learning agility, and a culture where continuous upskilling is normal. For APAR, balancing automation with reskilling is therefore not a one-off initiative, but a long-term commitment to evolving technology and people in tandem.

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