

What Top GCCs Are Doing Differently in Talent Development (SCAV-Aligned)



Traditional
Development:
Fragmented



SCAV-Aligned
Development:
Integrated

The Transformation of Global Capability Centres

Global Capability Centres in India are undergoing a profound transformation. They are evolving from cost-optimizers into strategic value creators—engines of innovation, digital transformation, and product excellence.

This shift has fundamentally altered what organizations expect from their employees.

India now hosts over **1,700 GCCs employing 1.9 million professionals** and generating \$64.6 billion in revenue. Global leadership roles from India-based GCCs have grown at a **40 percent CAGR over five years**, projected to exceed 30,000 by 2030 ^[1]. The talent is available and ready to lead.

But the real story isn't about numbers. It's about how GCCs are fundamentally rethinking talent development—and why their approach aligns closely with SCAV principles.

From Headcount to High Impact

The traditional model of hiring 100 engineers is being replaced by compact teams of specialists driving value through AI-led workflows. According to a report by Zinnov, **over 60 percent of all GCCs today aim to drive growth through tech productivity rather than expanding headcount** ^[2].

Early adopters using generative AI deeply in their operating models report **5-10 percent cost reductions and up to 30 percent productivity gains**.

The shift is unmistakable. As one leader noted, if this question had been asked two years ago, headcount growth would have been the primary KPI. Today, that equation no longer holds true. The historical ratios between business growth and headcount are collapsing. "If historically the ratio used to be 10:10 or 10:8, now the ratio has come down to 10:2 and eventually it will come down to 1."

At Zafin, AI is already being woven into every part of its global operations—product development, operations, learning, and ESG initiatives. Instead of focusing on bulk hiring, the company's centres in Trivandrum and Chennai now anchor global innovation, powered by a sharp team of 400 technologists focused on AI-driven capabilities ^[2].

The Shift from Skills to Capability

The message from top talent acquisition leaders is loud and clear. While academic achievements still hold foundational value, they are no longer the primary determinant for hiring. GCCs are intensely focused on a candidate's practical abilities, adaptability, and inherent drive to learn.

This is where SCAV alignment becomes visible. The framework's four pillars—Skills, Capability, AI-Augmented Development, and Velocity—mirror exactly what GCCs are prioritizing.

"We don't just look for graduates; we look for builders. We value curiosity, learning agility, and the ability to think beyond code," states Anitha Sarathy, India Head of People and Culture at Encora Inc.

The distinction is becoming critical. For years, corporate learning has focused on skills: new tools, coding languages, and compliance modules. But today's GCC requires more than technical competence. Employees need the ability to navigate ambiguity, collaborate across geographies, and influence without formal authority [3].

Traditional Focus	Emerging Focus
Technical skills	Cognitive ability
Execution speed	Problem-solving depth
Following processes	Shaping outcomes
Job descriptions	Capability profiles

As one GCC leader put it: *"The willingness and readiness to unlearn and learn faster is a very important thing to assess."* [3]

The AI-Ready Talent Mandate

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping engineering work at an unprecedented pace. The shelf life of a role has diminished significantly—job descriptions change within six months.

EY's GCC Pulse Survey 2024 shows that nearly 70% of these centers are investing in generative AI and 78% are actively upskilling teams for AI adoption [2].

81 percent of GCCs are actively training teams on GenAI, and 71 percent have reskilling embedded in core talent strategy [1].

58 percent of GCCs are now investing in agentic AI [4].

The strategy is to hire professionals who combine business acumen, AI fluency, and the ability to understand how their decisions impact broader organizational outcomes. According to SHRM India and LinkedIn's Talent Strategy Playbook, **only 13% of GCCs have truly integrated AI across their talent operations**, despite 67% using it occasionally or moderately [5]. The gap between intent and execution remains significant.

The Cognitive Priority

Over **75% of new GCC investments are expected to be AI-native by design**, embedding GenAI, decision intelligence, and autonomous workflows across engineering, finance, cybersecurity, and customer experience.

This has created a decisive shift in what leaders value during hiring. As one leader described, future leaders need to be the ones who understand the product, who have customer empathy, are data curious, and understand foundational systems engineering.

The evidence from industry conversations is consistent. Cognitive ability—not coding speed—is becoming the primary filter.

53% of GCCs have adopted skill-based platforms, but only **10% assess future skills regularly**, hindering workforce agility ^[5]. This is precisely where SCAV's Velocity dimension addresses the gap.

"Skill-based hiring has definitively taken precedence," asserts Narane Gundabathula, Executive Manager, Talent Acquisition at Hexagon R&D India. "At Hexagon R&D India, the key pillars for our hiring are technical capability, adaptability, ownership mindset and strong ethical belief system. We also look for a passion for continuous learning—an essential trait in fast-evolving tech domains."

What This Means for Talent Management

The message from GCC leaders is clear: organizations must evolve from hiring for roles to designing for careers ^[1]. Professionals don't leave for better salaries—they leave for better futures.

Career architecture in practice means:

- Giving engineers and domain experts ownership over global mandates, not segmented tasks
- Building rotational pathways that expose talent across business functions
- Measuring center performance by what the GCC can own end-to-end, not by how efficiently it executes instructions ^[1]

Reskilling is not an HR program—it is a business strategy. The old metric of how many employees completed a training module is no longer valid. Capability centers need to assess how many are working on problems that did not exist in the enterprise two years ago.

As one leader noted: *"It's not about tasks, it's about outcomes. That's a clear shift in the mindset of people and that is not easy to drive."* ^[4]

Where Leaders Stand Apart

GCCs are evolving from cost-driven delivery units into innovation-led strategic hubs. The centres that will define the next decade of global business are being built today by leaders asking harder questions about career design, reskilling, talent pipelines, and what it truly means to own innovation rather than simply support it.

Keeping pace with GCC talent strategies is no longer a differentiator. It's becoming a business necessity.

The leaders who stand apart are looking beyond hiring numbers and immediate delivery. They're building environments where people can continuously develop, take on greater responsibility, and contribute to higher-value work.

Because the centres that get this right will attract better talent, develop them faster, and retain them longer. They'll also create stronger internal capabilities and become more valuable strategic partners to the global organization.

The talent is there. The infrastructure is being built around it.

The variable is leadership intent—and the willingness to turn talent strategy into a long-term competitive advantage.

References

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