Building skills at scale with generative AI

Embracing a new era of learning and development

Emerging technologies, including both traditional and generative AI (gen AI), are transforming business and the public sector at a remarkable pace and scale.

Success requires organizations to set and guide a vision for [reinventing work, reshaping the workforce and preparing workers for a gen AI world](#). But how do you make sure you have the workforce skills and capabilities needed to thrive now and in the future?

> **Despite 94% of people saying they are ready to learn new skills to work with gen AI, only 5% of organizations are actively reskilling their workforce at scale[1].**
>
> **However, CXOs are recognizing this, with 91% of those we surveyed planning to increase their spending on data and AI training in the next 12 months[2].**

We won't meet the accelerating demands for new workforce skills and capabilities using traditional education models alone. The "one size fits most" approach that we have relied upon for decades, including classroom training and online training catalogs, are helpful, but do not deliver the new skills we need at the scale and speed required.

The power of personalized, contextualized learning

Educators and researchers agree that the most effective learning is personalized and contextualized to the needs of the learner and the environment where the learning will be applied. This is true for learners of all ages, in both academic and professional settings.

Personalized learning acknowledges that each learner is unique, with different needs and different motivations. By tailoring the learning experience to the individual, learners are more engaged and can more effectively absorb new information.

Contextualized learning takes this a step further by embedding the learning in relevant, real-world scenarios. When learners see the direct connection between what they are learning and how it applies to their lives, they are more likely to understand, retain and apply the knowledge effectively.

Whether it's an experienced finance professional learning project management skills by simulating a real-world finance transformation project, or an entry-level technologist learning agile by simulating a mid-stage systems development project, personalized and contextualized learning accelerates skill development.

1. [Work, Workforce, Workers: Reinvented in the age of generative AI](#), 2024
2. Accenture Skilling Pulse Survey 2024

The power of gen AI to scale role-based learning

Personalized, contextualized, role-based learning has traditionally been difficult to implement at scale in large organizations due to several factors: limited access to expert instructors, high costs associated with creating immersive learning environments, and the complexities introduced by diverse roles and contexts where the learned skills will be applied. However, gen AI is emerging as a potent solution to overcome these challenges, enabling organizations to deliver personalized, contextualized, role-based learning experiences that support both individual and organizational skill development.

Early applications of gen AI in education are having astounding effects on the reach, depth and speed of knowledge and skill building. Gen AI is making once unscalable solutions such as personalized tutoring and highly contextualized simulations scalable, at manageable costs, available 24x7.

Imagine a sales professional needing to improve their negotiation skills. Instead of a generic online course, a gen AI platform can simulate realistic negotiation scenarios tailored to the individual's industry, experience and the specifics of the products they are selling. The AI can provide real-time feedback, adapting to the learner's strengths and weaknesses, simulating different client personalities, and even mimicking specific deal complexities unique to the learner's role. This personalized approach ensures the skills learned are directly applicable to the sales professional's work environment, increasing their confidence and effectiveness in real-world negotiations.

Both learning and development leaders and learners already have a range of gen AI-powered tools to choose from to support their learning. Scalable, personalized learning experiences can be custom created using highly accessible tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude, with zero programming experience required. Test it out for yourself, Gemini's Learning Coach is a great place to start.

Corporate educators also have thousands of pre-built tools to choose from including pre-made GPTs on the platforms above and higher fidelity experiences of standalone platforms such as TouchCast Mentor, Praxis Labs and Talespin. These tools span all aspects of education, including instructional design, content creation, learning experience delivery and performance support.

"Generative AI empowers organizations to deliver personalized, contextualized and role-based experiential training at scale. By tailoring learning experiences to each individual's specific needs, real-world contexts and roles, AI accelerates skill development, transforming workforce training into a highly relevant, actionable and outcomes-driven process."

— Prof. Majd Sakr, Chief Learning & Research Officer, Accenture

Gen AI learning simulation in action

We created a Learning Simulation Creator tool on ChatGPT to support 1:1 practice in the subject area and context of the learner's choosing. The GPT has been trained to offer three different contexts for the simulation, and to accept additional inputs for the learner as appropriate to further extend the context of the scenario. Additional inputs may include product manuals, sales models, leadership frameworks, policy documents and more.

It's one example of how gen AI is changing the game for learning in accessible, "here today" ways. The tool was created with zero programming experience, leveraging base prompts from Ethan Mollick's "More Useful Things" prompt library. It has been tested on dozens of scenarios including delivering difficult feedback to a team member, negotiating changes to contract terms and convincing a senior stakeholder to invest in gen AI learning capabilities.

Try it out (Requires a paid subscription to ChatGPT)

The future of learning is here

The global skills gap is widening at an alarming rate, and traditional reskilling / upskilling methods need enhancement and reconsideration to keep pace. While gen AI isn't a magic bullet for this complex issue, it provides a powerful tool to revolutionize how we learn and develop throughout our lifetime.

The technology is ready, and its potential is huge. It's time to embrace gen AI's transformative power and unlock a new era of skill-building. Let's harness this innovation to empower our workforce, bridge the skills gap and build a future where continuous learning and development are not just possible, but the norm. The future of learning is here. **Let's seize it.**

Contacts:

Allison Horn
Global Lead - Talent Transformation
Talent and Organization
allison.m.horn@accenture.com

John Goodyer
Managing Director
Talent and Organization
John.goodyer@accenture.com