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The culture of innovation has now come to the Indian shop floor. Adopting advanced technologies is inevitable. The challenge is, how the Indian industry will learn from global challenges and adapt with efficiency.

And this is a need that India must recognise. An aggressive investment climate has been created, however, it cannot be sustained unless deep structural reforms take place. The Indian industry needs to ensure that these reforms are sustainable. For this, it has to upgrade its manufacturing and manpower skills. As the global environment gets more competitive than ever before, an adaptive and flexible technological advancement is the need of the hour.

The manufacturing sector is a key growth driver for the Indian economy and it is essential that every shop floor or corporate manager and decision maker nurtures a 'culture of innovation'. Because eventually, the only fixed feature of the shop floor will be the ceiling and the floor, as entire manufacturing processes will be a flexible, configurable wireless network of machines. On the shop floors, the machine and line manufacturing data will be thus, assimilated, collated and analysed. Information, such as, predictive maintenance with suggestions for efficiency improvement and awareness of

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potential failures will then be intimated to the shop supervisor. These, in line with manufacturing/process activities, will be exchanged in real time, between shop floor supervisors, production managers and decision makers, through a smart tablet or phone. This will improve the process manufacturing efficiency.

All Indian manufacturing sectors need to upgrade their current technology and skill status. Technology upgrades and skill-set development of people have to run hand-in-hand. Simultaneous initiatives for training manpower to global standards and steps for shop floor advancement need to run in tandem.

Plus, the 'Make in India' initiative has identified its focus on key areas for the manufacturing industry to compete at the global level, through adoption of advanced manufacturing trends, such as, Additive Manufacturing or Augmented Reality. Currently, about 10% of Indian

companies have taken steps to adopt advanced manufacturing tools. However, this trend has not percolated to the MSME sector, a backbone of the Indian industry. The industry needs to leap towards the advanced manufacturing trends by creating awareness about them. Here, a strong association between industry and academia can prove helpful.

Just as the Indian industry realises that the time for upgrading itself is now, so does the Indian workforce, as they realise that they need to be more flexible. This freshly aware workforce, with the relevant skill training, will be a true leverage that the industry can use. This hand-in-hand approach will transform it, including their relationship with their workforce and customers in equal measure.

Everyone, from CEOs to customers, are ready to explore the potential of advanced manufacturing. Technology is a great catalyst for competitive edge in the market. However, all of us need to create awareness together and produce options for advanced technologies that are homegrown and cost effective. The focus areas need to be product and services innovation, along with versatile manufacturing lines. Cost optimisation, supply chain analytics, revenue maximisation will then follow.

We all need to collaborate first, and compete later. □