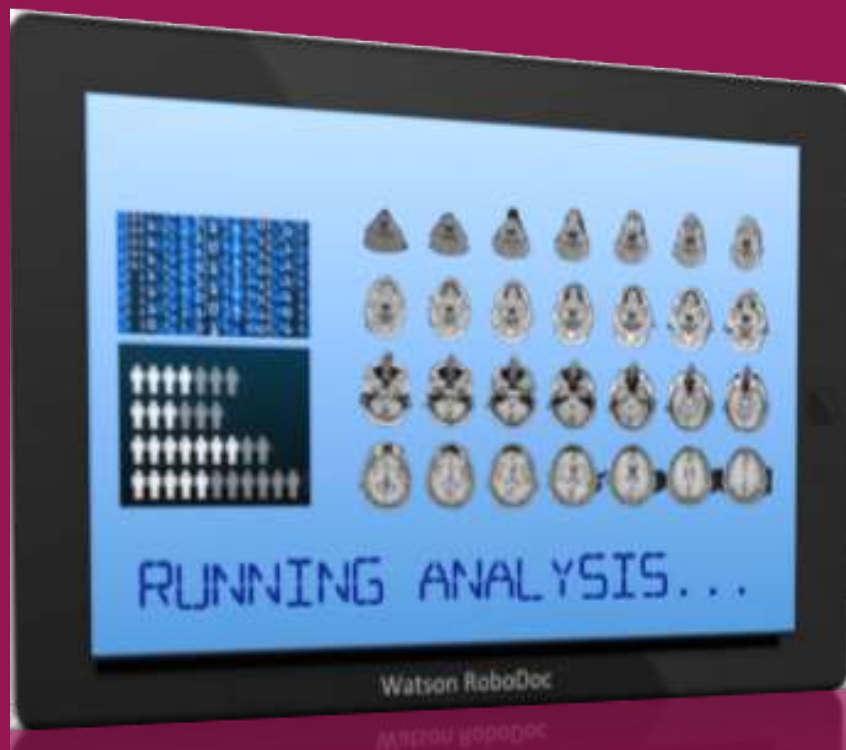




20th November 2020

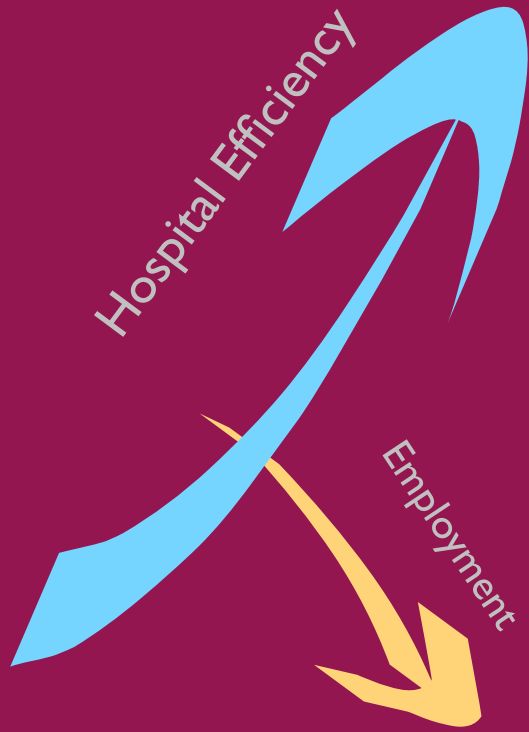
Dejected!

I am in the pits today! I spent four years in medical school training to be a radiologist, followed by last five months at WeCare Hospital and it seems I will lose my job even before I complete my residency!



Why?

Well, because the hospital has decided to deploy Watson Imaging - an Artificial Intelligence based imaging system that can compare an X-ray image with millions of other X-ray images in a millionth of a second and give a diagnosis.



The hospital has decided to replace four-eyes diagnosis (i.e. two radiologists giving their opinion) with one doctor and Watson Imaging system figuring it all out!

What's worse, within a year the hospital plans to have only two senior radiologists on the payroll because they think with Mr Watson's help two senior doctors will be enough to cope with the load.



I had my first session with the career counsellor at the hospital.

She is going to suggest how I can make a switch to another specialisation. Which, of course, means going back to studying and I just got out of college!



The career counselor said in the 21st century we all need to keep reinventing ourselves!

I wish I had reinvented myself before I passed out from school :-)

WORKSHOP

Fire up
the
Learner
within!



Flashback

10th July 2014 - Jiah's first day in Class Eleven

Super first day! There was a workshop titled 'Fire Up the Learner Within'.

I bunked!

Hey, I scored 92% in Class Ten. I am pretty fired up!
What new can the workshop possibly teach me about learning!



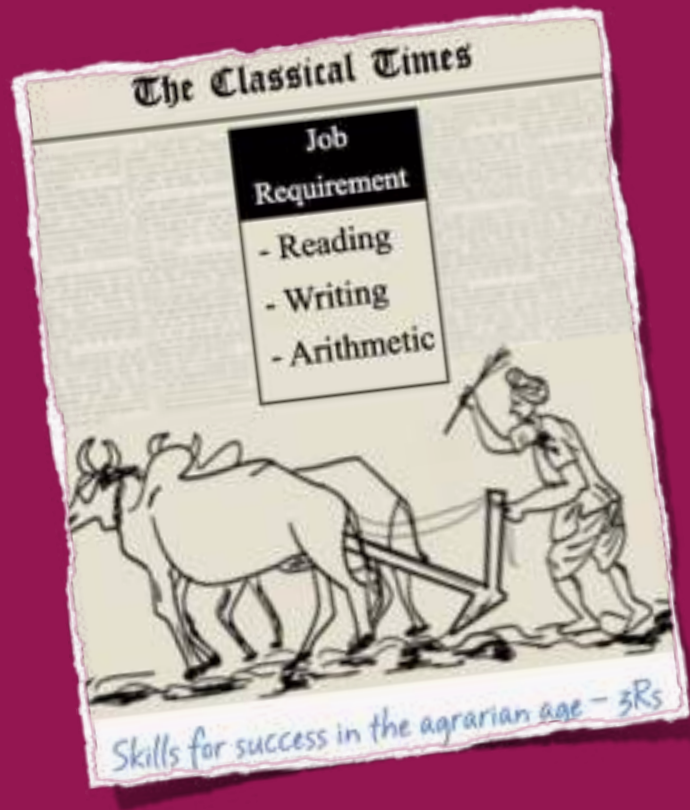
Reinvented Jiah's approach

Phew, what a day! I thought I knew the endgame of education – it's all about scoring marks!

Figured why they say those who don't know history are condemned to repeat it.

The workshop instructor told us

**THE EVOLVING
STORY OF
EDUCATIONAL
OUTCOMES** 000



The instructor explained, when agriculture was the predominant economic activity it was sufficient to know the 3Rs – reading, writing and arithmetic.

Children learnt their family vocation by apprenticing with their parents, uncles and aunts. Thus, focus of formal education was on imparting the 3Rs.

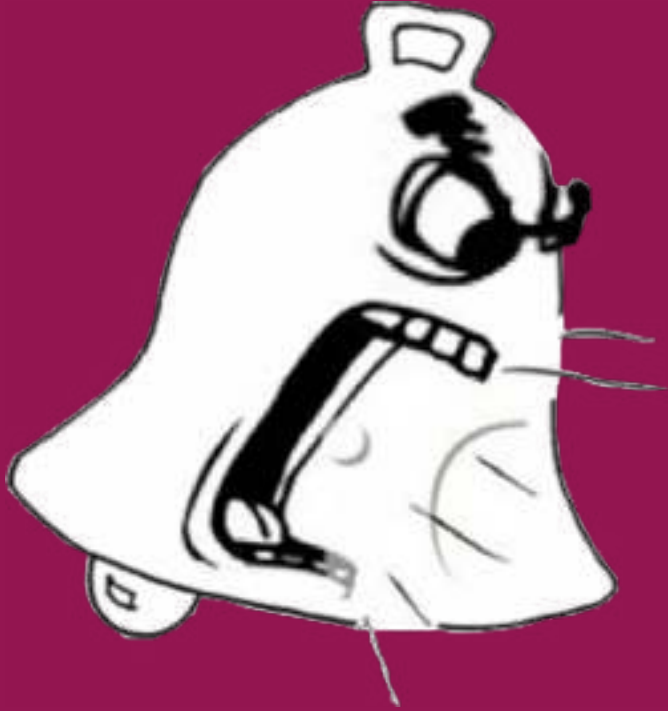


Post the industrial revolution factories became the biggest employment generators and to get a job in a factory, in addition to the 3Rs, **one needed to learn a technical skill** and have the discipline to work in a factory setting.



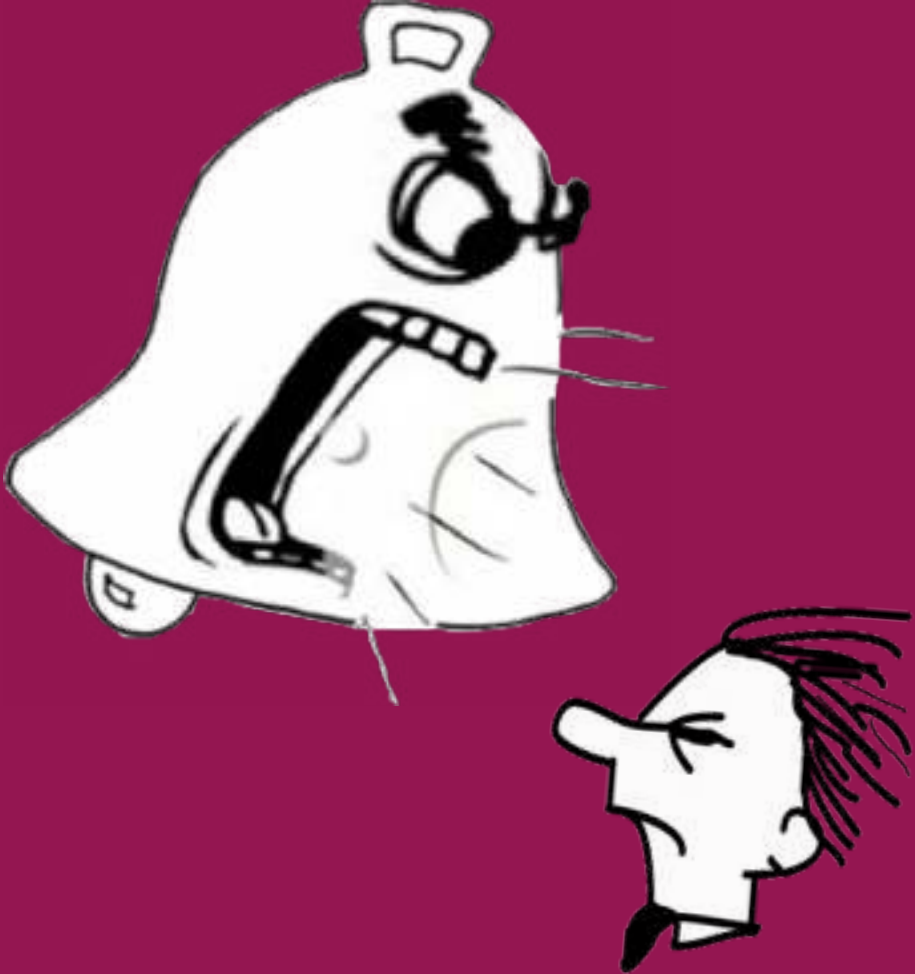
The workshop instructor told us an interesting story - about the school bell.

I didn't know that the school bell that rings to indicate end of a study period was introduced in schools after the industrial revolution to inculcate discipline.



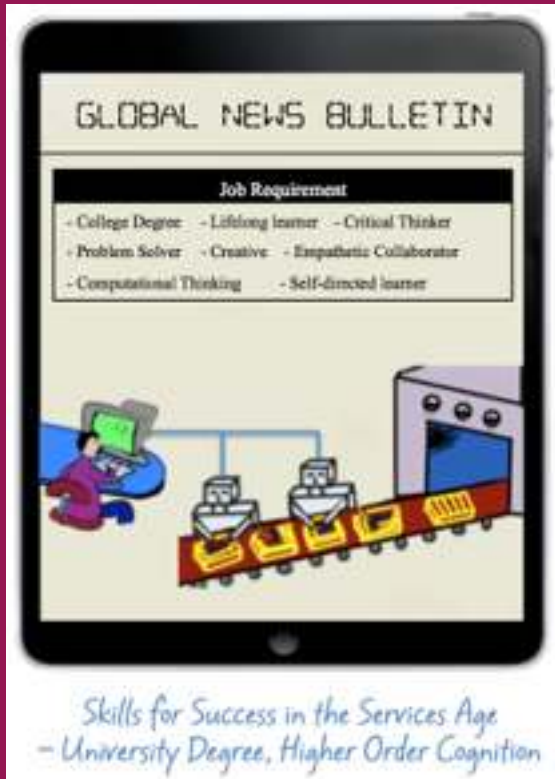
Before the industrial revolution, in the agrarian age, people worked in their fields. They thought about time in days and months not in hours because their time horizon was based on seasons.

But when people had to be trained to work in factories, where shifts were 8-10 hours long, with 15 minutes coffee and lunch breaks in between, they had to be disciplined and taught punctuality.



Having forty minute long study period and then shifting to another subject or activity was considered a good way of changing habits.

And so the dreaded bell was introduced in schools – to prepare students for jobs in factories!



After the agricultural and manufacturing age came the services age. Services sector became the major employer, i.e. there was a growing demand for professionals like doctors, engineers, lawyers, chartered accountants, marketing and advertising professionals and so forth.

To thrive in the services age one needed deep knowledge in a domain and getting a University degree became essential.

lifelong employment



Till the 19th and even in the 20th century people who stockpiled knowledge in a particular discipline were usually guaranteed lifelong employment.

You slogged to get a University degree but then you could mostly cruise in life. Ya, all my uncles and aunts, especially those who got a government job, never had to worry about losing their job unless they did something terribly wrong!

The challenge of **Automation** and **COMPUTERISATION**

But now the complexion of the economy is again changing. Mechanisation, automation and computerisation are bringing about another metamorphosis.

When Henry Ford set up the first car factory that had an assembly line to help in mass production (before that artisans produced one unit at a time – say one horse carriage, or one table, or one chair) humans still manned this assembly line. But now very few humans are needed and machines and robots do most work in factories.

The challenge today is that tasks that can get automated get done by machines, tasks that can be reduced to an algorithm get done by computers; knowledge and basic analytical skills no longer assure lifelong employability



Bank 'tellers', my dad tells me, used to count and give money in a bank. Now you have **ATM – Automated 'Teller' Machines.**

The function of bank teller has been automated.



Take another example – it was humans who ploughed the land when farming was invented, then humans used animals to help plough the land and now tractors do this job.

Tractors are still driven by humans but you can imagine **Google's Driverless car**, already functional in America, soon leading to a driverless tractor. We will have APMs – Automated Plough Machines!

Tele-marketing jobs



First got outsourced to where labour was cheaper



Now they are getting automated



Dyson 360 Eye - a commercially available robotic vacuum cleaner

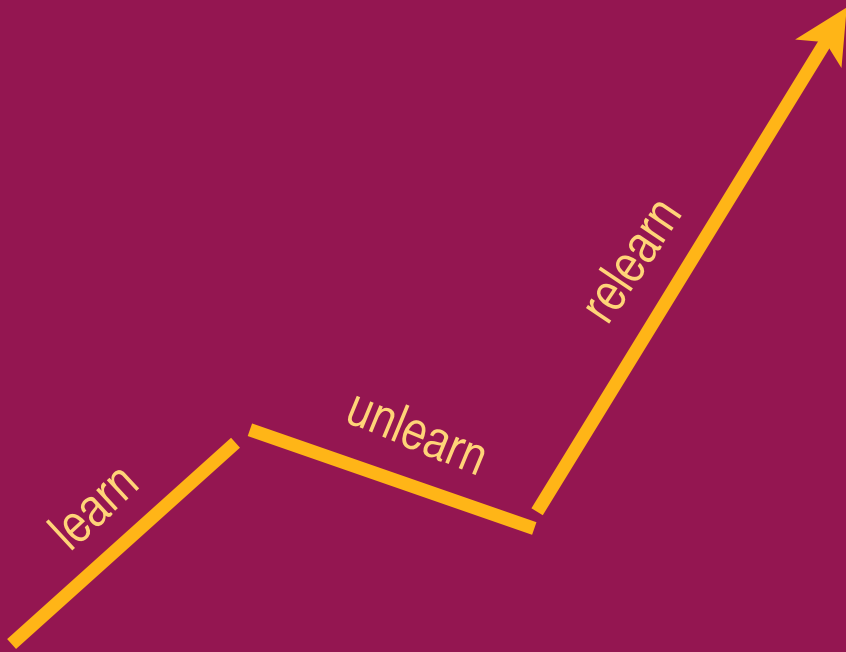
Automation and computerisation impacts everyone because **low-skill jobs get automated and done by machines**. Those who were doing these tasks and do not have any other higher-order skills, lose their job.

Think house help in the west getting replaced by vacuum cleaners, washing machines and dishwashers. And now new vacuum cleaners are automated robots that don't even need an operator.



Even humans who have higher-order cognitive skills are no longer guaranteed lifelong employment.

This is simply because while getting a University degree they accumulated lot of knowledge in a particular field but within a year of getting their degree so much new information gets generated in that field that if they do not keep abreast of new information they become redundant.



Thus, Self-directed Lifelong Learning becomes imperative just to remain employable in the 21st century.

**For Learning more about skills essential for
success and well-being in the 21st century**

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