



AVINASH KAUL

Keynote Speaker · Former Media CEO · Bestselling Author

Former CEO of the Indian partner networks of CNBC, CNN, Forbes and A+E (Network18) and of Times Television Network

#1 AMAZON.IN BEST SELLER

Reached #1 in six categories and #19 among all books, July 2026
Went into reprint within ten days of launch



Everything he speaks about, he lived first.

Every mountain has a path. Let's find yours.

NETWORKS HE LED

CNBC-TV18 · CNN-News18 · Forbes India · History TV18 · Times Now · ET Now

GLOBAL GROUPS HE HAS WORKED IN

WPP (J. Walter Thompson) · News Corp (Star TV) · Discovery Communications · A+E Networks

PUBLISHED BY HarperCollins

ABOUT AVINASH

At seventeen, Avinash Kaul lost his home. At thirty-six, he became a CEO. At fifty-three, he stepped away from the boardroom to tell the story of everything in between. That story became *The Next Mountain*, a deeply personal memoir for anyone still climbing their own mountain.

The world knows Kashmir as a conflict zone. Avinash lived it, as part of a small minority community forced out as militancy took hold. He rebuilt his life in India and went on to lead the largest news network in the world's largest democracy.

He left Kashmir on the night of 19 January 1990. His father put him on a crowded bus out of the city, and he rode on the engine bonnet because there were no seats left, the metal burning through his clothes in the freezing night air. By dawn, he was a refugee. In Jammu, he slept in a neighbour's garage, stood in a refugee registration line for his family's ration of rice, and studied in a makeshift government school housed in tents.

From there, he completed his engineering degree, graduating at the top of his class, before earning an MBA from Sydenham Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai. Over the next three decades, he built a career across J. Walter Thompson (HTA), Discovery Communications, Star TV, NDTV, Times Television Network and Network18, serving as CEO for sixteen years in one of the world's most demanding news media environments: the world's largest democracy, with channels in more than a dozen languages, through changes of government, and with business news run through every economic cycle. He most recently served as CEO, Network18 (Broadcast & Publishing), and Managing Director, A+E Networks | TV18, where he led CNBC-TV18, CNN-News18, History TV18 and Forbes India. He was named News Television CEO of the Year at the 2019 exchange4media News Broadcasting Awards (ENBA), and sits on the Managing Committee of The Advertising Club, Mumbai's advertising industry body (2026–27).

The Next Mountain: Notes on Resilience, Leadership and Purpose (HarperCollins), written with Priya Kumar, is the story of that climb. Its ideas began on school climbing camps in the mountains of Kashmir, where preparation mattered, teamwork mattered and ego did not. Life tested those lessons over the decades that followed.

Today, Avinash speaks worldwide on resilience, leadership and how business and media work together, and advises CEOs and boards. Having worked inside global groups such as WPP, News Corp and Discovery as well as Indian companies, he bridges multinational and Indian business culture for companies growing in India and other fast-growing markets. He lives in Mumbai.

PRAISE FOR THE NEXT MOUNTAIN

"He turns it into fuel. Into leadership. Into legacy... Every corporate leader should read it to understand what true resilience looks like."

Anupam Kher — Padma Bhushan awardee (India's third-highest civilian honour), actor & author

"From exile to boardroom, Avinash turns life's harshest climbs into a masterclass on resilience, leadership and purpose."

Ankur Warikoo — author & entrepreneur

"It is a tactical manual for growth that emphasizes integrity, grit and the courage to 'conquer yourself'."

Rahul Kanwal — editor-in-chief, NDTV

SIGNATURE KEYNOTES

FLAGSHIP KEYNOTE

Exile, Ambition, and the Next Mountain

At seventeen, he was forced to leave Kashmir with almost nothing. He went on to run the Indian homes of CNN, CNBC, Forbes and History, then walked away at the top. A story of conflict, ambition and reinvention for anyone climbing their own mountain. Draws on three of his five mountains: adversity, ambition and reinvention.

Ideal for: International conferences, leadership summits, resilience and change programmes.

Leadership & the Long Climb

Leadership from the inside, told by someone who reached the top without a map or a mentor: the calls you make alone, the teams you build so the work outlasts you, and how quiet the top can get.

Ideal for: High-potential programmes, CXO forums, leadership academies.

The Next Mountain: Purpose Beyond the Peak

Drawn from his book: what happens after the summit? Why we climb, when turning back is the wiser move, and why the way down deserves as much thought as the way up.

Ideal for: Boards, succession conversations, annual conferences, senior leadership retreats.

Business and Media: Making the Partnership Work

Business and media need each other and rarely agree. A business channel has nothing to say without companies coming to talk, and a company has no platform without the channel. That tension is built in, and it can be managed. This talk is practical advice on how: how to build a relationship with the media that is human and consistent through good quarters and bad, through crisis, and beyond any one CEO's tenure, so that both sides win. Drawing on twenty-eight years in media, seen through a business lens.

Ideal for: CEOs, boards, founders, CXOs and corporate communications teams; business and industry conferences.

His five mountains: adversity, ambition, leadership, reinvention and purpose. The full five make a half-day or full-day leadership session.

WHAT AUDIENCES SAY

Audiences don't write about the résumé. They write about the room.

"If I had to list the 25 best moments of my life, this moment would definitely feature in it, and Avinash, who came in as Chief Guest, is one of the biggest reasons."

Aaditya Sain, The LIT School

"What a powerful and positive speech. Hats off to you. What a journey."

Lav Kumar, Chandigarh University

"What struck me most was his warmth, his clarity of thought and how generously he shares what life has taught him. I came back genuinely inspired."

Vikas Bagaria, Founder, PeeSafe

"Hearing about your own career journey gave me confidence that where we begin doesn't define where we can reach."

Student, Xavier Institute of Communications

"A brilliant session!"

Sherilyn Shackell, Founder & Global CEO, The Marketing Academy

"An inspiring and high-impact gathering."

Vitesh Barar, Director Marketing, BMW Group India

"A standout closing session... His perspective truly hit home."

Student, Chandigarh University AI Fest

ALSO SPEAKS ON

India: The Market Every Board Is Asking About

Building, selling and leading in a market of 1.4 billion people, from three decades of doing it.

FORMATS

Keynote (45–60 min) · fireside conversation · moderated panel · half-day or full-day leadership session · closed-door board session. In person or virtual; every talk adjusted to the room.

2026 AT A GLANCE

17

talks, panels and moderations in 2026

16

years as a CEO, 28 in media

#1

Amazon.in bestseller in six categories

4.6/5

reader rating on Amazon.in

WHERE HE HAS SPOKEN

CORPORATE & PROFESSIONAL

- **The Marketing Academy (London).** CEO fireside for the APAC CMO Fellowship, Taj Mahal Palace Mumbai; Virtual Campus session, listed first among its most-watched sessions in July 2026; mentor to three global CXOs on the 2026 Global Fellowship, across Europe, the UK and South-East Asia.
- **BMW India.** Fireside conversation for BMW's guests, BMW Deutsche Motoren, Delhi.
- **Ladies Who Lead, Mumbai.** Leaders Lounge conversation for a women's leadership network.

UNIVERSITIES & INSTITUTIONS

- **Chandigarh University, AI Fest 2026.** Chief Guest at the closing session of a national AI festival at a leading private university in northern India, before a crowd of thousands.
- **Xavier Institute of Communications, Mumbai.** Guest session for the PR and Corporate Communication batch of a media school.
- **The LIT School, Bengaluru.** Chief Guest, graduation ceremony of a business and entrepreneurship school. Also talks at IIT Delhi, one of India's premier engineering institutes.

MODERATED LAUNCHES

- **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), Sep 2026.** Moderated the launch of Indomitable, a book by Arundhati Bhattacharya, former chair of State Bank of India, at BSE, Asia's oldest stock exchange; chief guest Mukesh Ambani, Chairman of Reliance Industries.
- **Book of Daily Brilliance, Soho House Mumbai (Jul 2026).** In conversation with Pamela Puja Kirpalani at her book launch.

INDUSTRY, MEDIA & COMMUNITY

- **e4m English Journalism Conference 2026.** Speaker on the future of media, at exchange4media, India's media and marketing trade publication.
- **Global Kashmiri Pandit Conclave, Srinagar.** Panel, "From Exile to Excellence".
- **WOI India Leaders' Retreat, Gulmarg.** Invitation-only retreat for founders, investors and leaders.
- **Juries.** Jury Chair, AdAura Awards 2026; juror, MMA SMARTIES India 2026 and e4m 40 Under 40.

Coming up: Orange City Literature Festival, Nagpur (Nov 2026) · Thane Literature Festival (Dec 2026) · Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters, Kerala (Jan 2027)

WHAT READERS SAY

"Some self-help books give you a list of things you should do. This one makes you want to climb."

"Like sitting across from someone whose life has been shaped by hardship, resilience, and quiet wisdom."

"Far more than a memoir of professional success."

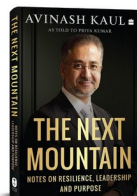
Reader reviews, Amazon.in · 4.6 out of 5 from 92 ratings

WATCH

- Chief Guest address, Chandigarh University AI Fest www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDCBR7z2bEU
- NDTV: Kashmir Refugee Camps To CEO www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBbmuOR00_c
- Long-form: The PVT Show www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KbsFe1Gw_4
- Long-form: INDmoney www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg8nccPWKP4

Podcasts and media: The PVT Show, TS POD, INDmoney, NDTV, exchange4media, Samachar4Media, BIG FM, Red FM. Nearly 130,000 views of his long-form interviews on YouTube.

THE BOOK



The Next Mountain: Notes on Resilience, Leadership and Purpose (HarperCollins, July 2026), co-authored with Priya Kumar. Reached #1 on Amazon.in in six categories: Biographies & Autobiographies, True Accounts, Cinema & Broadcast, Industries, Film & Television and Journalism. The book went into reprint within ten days of launch. Rated 4.6 out of 5 by readers on Amazon.in (Amazon India).

Also on Audible. Available on Amazon and wherever books are sold.

To book: ak@avinashkaul.in · avinashkaul.in/speaking · In person or virtual

"You don't conquer the mountain; you conquer yourself."