



Rashmi Airan

ENTREPRENEUR/FOUNDER • INFLUENCER

An Ivy League educated attorney, Wall Street investment banker, serial entrepreneur, college professor, professionally trained vocalist, and a globally recognized transformation expert.

- **International Speaker and Storyteller:** Delivering transformational insights through hundreds of keynotes across the globe
- **Strategic Change Catalyst:** Guiding organizational transformation through 100+ immersive workshops focused on leadership alignment and cultural excellence
- **Serial Entrepreneur:** Successfully launched and scaled three ventures spanning legal services and business consulting
- **Emerging Voice:** Sharing deeper insights through an upcoming book and featured subject in a new documentary series

Rashmi Airan's 2026 Biography

Rashmi Airan: Sculpting Strategic Growth and Brilliance out of Struggle

Rashmi Airan is a force of nature. A keynote speaker, consultant, and unapologetic truth-teller, she shakes up rooms with her raw, riveting story—one that challenges everything you think you know about leadership, ethics, and the hidden traps of ambition. She doesn't just speak about resilience; she lives it, proving that even the most crushing failures can be transformed into a catalyst for growth, authenticity, and unshakable courage.

As a first-generation Indian American, Rashmi was raised to chase excellence. She did just that—graduating with honors from Columbia Law School, thriving in corporate America, and building her own law practice. But success has a dark side. During the housing boom, she made a decision that, at the time, seemed small—but had devastating consequences. A single ethical blind spot, fueled by the pressure to provide for her children, led to a federal prison sentence for bank fraud.

Prison shattered everything she thought she knew about herself. And then? She rebuilt—stronger, bolder, and more awake than ever. Through six months behind bars, Rashmi stripped away the layers of ego, guilt, and fear that had defined her. She emerged with a powerful message: our worst mistakes don't define us—our response to them does.

Now a “recovering government, corporate, and real estate lawyer,” Rashmi is a globally recognized speaker who fearlessly tackles the complexities of human behavior, decision-making, and ethical leadership. With 30+ years in business, law, and finance, she has a front-row seat to

AVAILABLE FOR

- Speaking

RASHMI'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Digital Transformation

LANGUAGES: English

the pressures that push good people into bad decisions—and she’s on a mission to wake up individuals and organizations before they fall into the same traps.

Her insights are backed by cutting-edge research in behavioral psychology, ethics, and leadership, and she’s partnered with global powerhouses like Coca-Cola, Cardinal Health, Merck, Comcast, Sotheby’s, and Hershey’s. Deloitte has recognized her transformational impact, and her story has been featured on ABC, PBS, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal.

Rashmi doesn’t do surface-level inspiration—she sparks deep, uncomfortable, necessary conversations. She challenges Fortune 100 leaders, financial firms, legal teams, and women’s groups to confront their blind spots, own their decisions, and rise through their struggles with integrity and courage.

Beyond the stage, she’s an avid hiker, globe-trotter, and proud mother of two. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Overtown Youth Center/Alonzo Mourning Foundation and is an Ambassador for The Key Clubhouse.

Her message is simple but urgent: Life will break you. Your choices will define you. And no matter how hard you fall—you can **RISE**.

Rashmi Airan's 2026 talks & topics

RISE THROUGH IT™: A Lawyer’s Journey to Federal Prison and Beyond

Everyday, leaders face a barrage of challenges, problems, and threats. The initial instinct may be to avoid adversity, retreating into comfort or quick fixes. But true growth does not come from avoidance—it comes from embracing the struggle, letting go of the limiting beliefs holding us back, and daring to act with courage.

Rashmi Airan knows firsthand what it means to Rise Through It™. Her remarkable journey—from the pinnacle of success with an Ivy League education to the humbling experience of federal prison—has illuminated life-changing lessons in determination, growth, and transformation. Rashmi’s story reveals that the most difficult struggles can become our greatest teachers when we choose to face them head-on and rise through them, rather than merely trying to “rise above” to escape.

Through her transformative RISE Process™, Rashmi empowers leaders to approach challenges with a bold and actionable framework:

1. **Embrace** - Lean into discomfort and accept the struggle.
2. **Let Go** - Release the ego, fear, control, and judgment that limit us.
3. **Dare** - Act with courage and conviction.

Rashmi’s approach shifts leaders from being victims of circumstance to becoming visionaries who thrive in adversity. By fostering a culture of courage, acceptance, and vulnerability, she teaches leaders to harness discomfort, unlock their inner strength, and rise through any challenge life presents.

When we choose to Rise Through It™, we embrace struggle, let go of what holds us back, and dare to rise as bold, grounded, and visionary leaders.

OUTCOMES

- **Master the RISE Process™**: Learn a proven framework to face challenges, transform obstacles into opportunities, and rise stronger.
- **Reframe Your Identity**: Embrace that true success comes not from what we achieve, but from who we become in the process.
- **Cultivate Courageous Leadership**: Create environments of safety and trust, where open communication, risk-taking, and vulnerability become strengths.
- **Turn Fear Into Action**: Equip yourself to navigate uncertainty, alleviate anxiety (including AI-related fears), and build a future-ready, adaptable workplace.

RISE THROUGH IT™: Empowering Women to Redefine Leadership and Shatter Barriers

Women carry the weight of unspoken expectations, societal judgment, and internalized shame that too often define the trajectory of our lives and careers. Rashmi Airan's journey is a testament to a truth too rarely spoken: failure does not define us—our response to it does. In her powerful keynote, Rashmi offers a new framework for empowerment, rooted in her transformative RISE Process™, to help women face life's struggles, confront fear, and rise with courage and conviction.

Through RISE, Rashmi challenges women to confront the realities of shame, self-doubt, and the fear of failure head-on. These barriers are not just personal; they are systemic. Women are often told how to process their setbacks, how to carry their burdens, and how to fit within a narrative shaped by others. Rashmi's message is simple yet profound: we have the power to rewrite that narrative.

- **Embrace**: Women are conditioned to avoid failure, but true strength comes from confronting every disruption—fear, shame, and even societal judgment—with unflinching honesty. Rashmi guides women to embrace discomfort, recognizing it as the catalyst for transformation.
- **Let Go**: Letting go is not about weakness; it is an act of power. Rashmi helps women shed the burdens of perfectionism, judgment (internal and external), and societal expectations. In their place, she builds the foundation of self-compassion and self-forgiveness, turning vulnerability into strength.
- **Dare**: It takes courage to reclaim your story and define your worth, especially in a world eager to decide it for you. Rashmi empowers women to take bold action, whether that means speaking up, taking risks, or leading with unapologetic authenticity.

This keynote goes beyond motivation—it offers women a roadmap to lead themselves and others with clarity, authenticity, and unshakable resilience. Rashmi's own story, from personal failure to profound transformation, underscores every word. She demonstrates that setbacks are not endpoints but opportunities to rise, and that leadership begins with the courage to define your own path. Rashmi's keynote is a rallying cry for women to rise—not in spite of their struggles, but because of them.

OUTCOMES

1. **Redefine Your Narrative**: Learn to take control of your story—failures, struggles, and all—so it reflects your truth and not the judgments of others.
2. **Harness Self-Compassion**: Break down the walls of shame and self-doubt that keep women from realizing their full potential.
3. **Lead with Conviction**: Build the courage to make bold decisions, challenge societal norms, and inspire those around you.
4. **Shatter Barriers**: Transform fear, judgment, and disruption into stepping stones for authentic, visionary leadership.

One decision can cost you everything—your career, your reputation, and your freedom. Ethical lapses don't happen overnight; they creep in through small compromises, unchecked pressures, and the belief that "everyone else is doing it." Rashmi Airan knows this firsthand.

From Wall Street to federal prison, Rashmi's journey is a powerful exposé of how even well-meaning professionals can fall into ethical traps—without realizing it until it's too late. She doesn't just talk about integrity; she forces leaders to confront the hidden dangers in their decision-making, the gray areas they ignore, and the blind spots that can derail everything they've built.

This keynote is a wake-up call and a strategic playbook, packed with real-world insights on how to navigate ethical dilemmas, mitigate risk, and foster a culture of accountability. Rashmi pulls back the curtain on the psychology of ethical decision-making, exposing how ambition, pressure, and misplaced trust can lead even the most accomplished professionals down the wrong path.

This isn't about ethics as a compliance checkbox—it's about protecting yourself, your business, and your legacy.

In a world where cutting corners can seem like the only way to win, will you have the foresight to do what's right before it's too late? Rashmi Airan delivers the insights—and the urgency—you can't afford to ignore

OUTCOMES:

- Identify ethical blind spots before they spiral into career-ending mistakes.
- Navigate high-pressure decisions with clarity, courage, and conviction.
- Implement real-world strategies to create a culture of integrity and accountability.
- Strengthen ethical leadership at every level of an organization.
- Balance business growth with decision-making that aligns with core values.

DHARMA LEADERSHIP™ - Finding Your Why?

Top talent isn't just struggling with burnout—it's losing its sense of purpose. Employees disengage, leaders plateau, and organizations scramble to retain high performers who feel like cogs in a machine. The real issue? A crisis of identity.

Rashmi Airan, a former Wall Street attorney turned leadership provocateur, delivers a wake-up call with her Dharma Leadership™ framework—a bold, psychology-backed methodology that shifts the focus from what we do to who we are. Purpose isn't a buzzword; it's the missing link between high performance and lasting fulfillment.

Her framework, embraced by Fortune 100 companies and Deloitte, isn't just about leadership—it's about rewiring how organizations operate. Rashmi forces executives and teams to confront blind spots, break free from transactional thinking, and rediscover their "why"—the driving force that fuels engagement, innovation, and sustainable success.

Dharma Leadership™ is not about soft inspiration—it's a hard reset on how we define leadership, moving beyond titles and ego to unlock true influence, ethical decision-making, and impact. When leaders operate from clarity and conviction, organizations don't just thrive—they create legacies.

If your organization is ready to turn disengagement into purpose, pressure into clarity, and leaders into changemakers, Rashmi Airan delivers the roadmap.

OUTCOMES:

- Align values with business strategy to create a competitive edge and retain top talent.
- Equip leaders with self-awareness tools to maximize individual and team performance.
- Cultivate authentic leadership that fosters trust, influence, and deep connection.

- Transform disengagement into purpose-driven work that fuels innovation and impact.
- Build a future-proof culture where employees stay, thrive, and drive meaningful results.

SILENT NO MORE: Remaking Mental Health in Leadership

In corporate America, where mental health often remains hidden, Rashmi Airan's journey from finance professional to federal prison sheds powerful light on this critical issue. Her crusade is deeply personal, stemming from her sister's decades long battle with mental illness and the tragic loss she and her family endured. Her daughter's ongoing struggles with anxiety, depression, and OCD further fuel her mission.

Inspired by their pain, Rashmi's mother co-founded the Key Clubhouse of South Florida, offering tangible support, including housing, to those facing mental health challenges. Drawing from this family history and her own incarceration experience, Rashmi argues that mental illness doesn't discriminate, affecting CEOs and entry level employees alike in today's high-pressure business world.

Through poignant storytelling and her groundbreaking RISE process™, she reframes mental health as a leadership opportunity. Rashmi shows how creating a mentally healthy work culture isn't just humane—it's a business imperative. She demonstrates how conditions like anxiety often come with unique strengths such as attention to detail and empathy, especially relevant as younger generations enter the workforce.

By booking her keynote, you're not only investing in leadership development but also joining a mission to ensure no one suffers in silence, from the boardroom to the mailroom. Be part of making mental wellness the heart of 21st-century leadership.

OUTCOMES

- Leaders will learn to destigmatize mental health, viewing it not as a weakness but as a universal human experience.
- Attendees will gain Rashmi's RISE Process™, a practical framework to proactively support workplace mental health.
- Learn to create a mentally healthy work culture that attracts and retains diverse talent, especially from younger generations.
- Leaders will transform personal mental health experiences into powerful tools for authentic leadership.

OPPOSITES ATTRACT: The Power of Turning Enemies into Allies

Customers and employees are struggling with the prevalence of technology and the lack of the human touch, leading to worsening turnover, and lower sales affecting business performance entirely. Establishing relationships is a cornerstone of sales and business growth, reflecting the fundamental principle that people prefer to do business with those they know, like, and trust. This concept underscores not just a transactional interaction but a relational dynamic that can significantly impact the bottom line and long-term success of a business.

Join us for an extraordinary presentation where Rashmi Airan, a former federal defendant, and Joseph Capone, the former federal prosecutor who investigated her case, come together to share their incredible journey.

Rashmi's transformative experience has inspired her to become a corporate motivational speaker, fearlessly spreading wisdom about decision-making and leadership. Despite their past adversities, Rashmi and Joe have developed a unique bond built on mutual respect and continuous growth.

Get ready for an engaging discussion as Joe provides his prosecutorial perspective on the case, focusing on key moments of decision-making. Collaborating now as allies, Joe and Rashmi will lead an interactive

conversation, offering valuable insights into how adversaries can become allies. Their story is living proof that transformation and reconciliation are possible, leading to a relationship unimaginable several years ago.

The importance of establishing relationships in sales and business cannot be overstated. It's a strategy that pays dividends not just in increased sales and business growth, but in building a sustainable, reputable, and resilient business that stands the test of time.

OUTCOMES

- Embrace a culture of transformation by proven framework to build relationships
- Discover how adversarial relationships can evolve into alliances
- Empower change by gaining insights from the collaboration between former adversaries.
- Establish the power of relationships and drive sales and growth through specific skills.

Beneath the Surface: Uncovering Hidden Risks in Leadership and the Power of Resilience

Global leaders face an unprecedented challenge: navigating the fine line between opportunity and compliance in a world of complex regulatory demands. One misstep can unravel years of hard work, destroy reputations, and destabilize entire organizations. Rashmi Airan brings a deeply personal perspective to this high-stakes reality, offering a raw, uncompromising look at the hidden risks leaders face and the resilience needed to overcome them.

Through her compelling story—from Wall Street's heights to the stark lessons of federal prison—Rashmi reveals how ambition, external pressures, and ethical blind spots can lead to catastrophic outcomes. She dissects the pivotal moments where decisions are made, examining the tensions leaders face and how integrity often hangs in the balance.

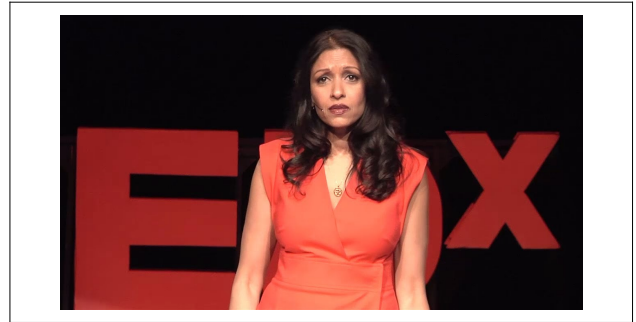
This keynote doesn't just identify problems; it provides solutions. Rashmi offers actionable strategies to build cultures of trust, embed ethics into decision-making, and adapt to the shifting global regulatory landscape. Her insights challenge leaders to rethink their priorities, recalibrate their approach, and future-proof their organizations in an uncertain world.

Rashmi Airan's keynote is more than a cautionary tale—it's a compelling guide for leaders who aspire to create lasting impact through principled decision-making. With her gripping storytelling and no-nonsense approach, Rashmi offers a powerful call to action for leaders to confront the risks beneath the surface and rise stronger.

OUTCOMES

- **Uncover Hidden Risks:** Explore the subtle but critical vulnerabilities that global leaders and organizations face in complex regulatory environments.
- **Build Ethical Systems:** Learn how to design and implement frameworks that promote accountability and compliance across diverse jurisdictions.
- **Reframe Decision-Making:** Discover how to align business ambition with global regulatory standards without compromising integrity.
- **Navigate Complexity with Resilience:** Develop strategies to thrive in volatile markets while maintaining a strong ethical foundation.
- **Lead with Purpose and Precision:** Equip your teams with the tools and vision to foster cultures rooted in transparency and trust.

Rashmi Airan's Videos



What Rashmi Airan's clients say

Rashmi worked with the Coca-Cola team for an entire day. She created such a meaningful impact on the pivotal issues of accountability and vulnerability. Her diverse and unique view has propelled her as a leader on these topics. Rashmi shares a personal story that we must strive to live through uncertainty with conviction and navigate through the gray area. Her workshop truly helped our team learn how to thrive in chaos, be adaptable and remain curious while always focusing on the organization's needs and long-term sustainability. Her story is relatable and she is truly a remarkable speaker and consultant!

Preeti Balwani

Former General Counsel and Global General Counsel , Coca-Cola, India and CRISIL Ltd.

What Rashmi brought to us is real-life experience with emotion, authenticity, and courage for immediate value add in our individual organizations. As a group of CEOs of our companies, we typically don't spend an entire day listening and engaging with one Coach/Consultant. Rashmi's workshop and message were extremely effective and impactful, both personally and professionally. Even after an entire day with Rashmi, we all wanted more. I am definitely planning on bringing Rashmi back to work with my own leadership team at my organization.

Reuben Xeureb

YPO

Rashmi's story illustrates the power of humility and transformation. Rashmi is an energy giver – whether live or virtual. She reminds us that we are all humans and fallible. I would recommend Rashmi, she is one the best speakers I have ever worked with and I will work with her again!

Damien Atkins

Former General Counsel , Hershey's Inc.

Excellent and Powerful!

Verne Harnish

Founder of EO, Founder of Scaling Up , Entrepreneur's Organization (EO)

Touching. Bold. Almost moved me to tears!

Peter Chee

Founder & CEO, MinimZero

The most mind capturing talk ever! 100% focused and visually present. Personable and relatable

Roshni Kadhiwala

CEO/Owner JLM Hotel Group , Asian American Hotel Owners Association

I had the pleasure of working with Rashmi Airan as conference planner for the 2020 Tri-State SHRM Conference. Rashmi was scheduled to present two in person sessions for us, but due to COVID-19, she easily adapted and presented her sessions virtually. Her presentations centered around taking ownership of your actions, and business ethics. Rashmi's ability to tell her story with candor, honesty and ownership makes her keynote(s) very relevant to business leaders. Thank you, Rashmi! Keep up the great work.

Lori Maher McCombs

Maher Group, LLC , SHRM Association Management Professional & Convention Planner

Rashmi spoke to our senior leadership team and coaches at Georgia Tech. Her story and message around decision-making was incredibly impactful as it hit home the fact that good and smart people can make bad decisions with dire consequences. Rashmi helps shed light through her research in behavioral ethics. She provides a mental process for maintaining ethical vigilance in our decision-making and how to avoid the overconfidence bias that leads to the slippery slope. I highly recommend Rashmi to my friends and colleagues as she will inspire and help create substantive change in our athletic environments around integrity and ethics.

Todd Stansbury

Georgia Tech University Athletics

In my 30 years as a federal prosecutor, I dealt with thousands of individuals involved in criminal conduct. Many were truly sorry for and embarrassed by their criminal conduct but happy to put their punishment behind them and move on as quickly as possible. But in my experience, only one of my former defendants - Rashmi Airan — has chosen to relive, repeatedly, her personal and professional failings in an effort to inspire and motivate others to avoid the poor choices she made.

It's a rare thing for a prosecutor and defendant to develop a relationship of mutual respect and friendship. We began as adversaries in a courtroom, became teammates in prosecuting others, and now collaborate in writing and speaking. Rashmi's acceptance of responsibility for her conduct, her deeply sincere expressions of remorse and humility, and her efforts to share her experiences with others who may be tempted to follow a misguided path, have been extraordinary. Rashmi tells a compelling story, rich with life lessons everyone can relate to.

Joe Capone

Rashmi's Prosecutor , Department of Justice, Brown University

Thank you so much for the time you spent sharing your story with vulnerability, creating a space for us to do the same, and sharing insight applicable to both personal and professional life choices. Your messaging resonated in unexpected and practical ways. I admire the courage on display to speak from a place of such openness and high character.

Grant Achilles

Head Baseball Coach , Brown University

I attended Rashmi's talk and I thought it was amazing. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to hear you speak. It was, without a doubt, the best session I have attended in my 40 years. I particularly liked your focus on our duty to the community and society as a whole.

James A. Martell

Colorado Bar Association

Rashmi's story is equal parts chilling and heart-warming. The lessons from her life experience weave together to form a cautionary tale for REALTORS®. In watching the room as Rashmi delivered her keynote, I have never seen a REALTOR® audience so transfixed on a speaker and her story. Her delivery is direct, touching, sad, funny and always brutally honest. Her candor and accountability were rewarded with an emotional standing ovation at the conclusion of her keynote.

Trying to capture and engage busy REALTORS® with compelling professional ethics and risk management content can be difficult....particularly in a large conference setting. When it comes to delivering a lesson on those two subjects in a poignant and unforgettable presentation, Rashmi and her story cannot be beat.

Scott A. Peterson, Esq.

Colorado Association of REALTORS®

Because Ms. Airan was only a few years older than the law students she spoke to and because she graduated near the top of her class, her impact on the students was powerful and immediate. I think her presentation gave students an entirely unique, more nuanced and certainly more vivid sense of how seemingly normal professional practice can cross the line over into fraud. She made a very valuable contribution to the students' that others cannot duplicate.

John C. Coffee, Jr.

Professor, Columbia University, School of Law

In sharing her story, Ms. Airan is helping make a difference and helping to favorably shift the ethics paradigm in the legal profession.

Michele DeStefano

Professor, University of Miami, School of Law

Rashmi's gripping presentation to more than 50 of our lawyers transformed the subject of professional responsibility from a textbook experience to a compelling human drama with real-life consequences. It was eye-opening and gut-wrenching, and Rashmi's willingness to share the lowest moment in her professional life and her takeaways was a real tribute to her character.

Scott L. Baena

Managing Partner, Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod, LLP