TEDxCCOE Hit Refresh

– Claude –
Here is a suggested script for an engaging and effective TEDX talk based on the provided content:

Hit Refresh: A Journey of Purposeful Pivots

Thank you all for being here today. I'm going to share my personal journey with you, one that may not be extraordinary, but is certainly different than ordinary. It's a path filled with purposeful pivots and refreshes that have shaped my life and career.

Let me give you some background. I'm a mechanical engineer who loved machine design and computer modeling from early on. I pursued my passion through a master's degree in the US and landed a job in Boston working in that domain. After a year, I returned to India and continued in the same field professionally with an MNC in Pune, rising to a decent senior position.

Then one day, I saw an ad for a startup beginning in Pune, with no employees yet. The pull was the opportunity for more responsibility as they were working for a leading CAD company with an office in China. I became the first employee, assembling computers on two tables in a makeshift office. That was my first refresh. The CAD giant later acquired us, and I rose to become a group manager and site leader. So within Pune's constraints, I was working for the best company in my field. Professionally, things were good.

But there was still one itch I needed to scratch - academics. I only had a master's degree, so the thought of pursuing a PhD grew stronger. I wanted that "Dr." before my name. I enrolled and began research, but soon realized I couldn't balance it effectively with my job. So I made the tough decision to quit and go all-in as a full-time student, surrounded by peers half my age. That second reset brought an economic and authority shift, but allowed me to eventually teach full courses in my own domain of CAD.

With decent publications under my belt, I was making solid progress in my research when I came across a paper suggesting a different approach to a problem I was working on. That led to my third refresh and pivot into the brand new, risky field of machine learning. At 44-45 years old, I was starting from scratch, a fresher in the ML job market. I began working for startups for free, just to build my skills and portfolio in areas like natural language processing. Teaching became my way to learn, and through training and talks, I landed jobs and worked for several years.

The desire for change struck again, so I took the plunge into becoming an independent AI consultant and coach - my fourth refresh. With a solid professional network, I can now afford to be selective in taking on high-impact opportunities that truly inspire me.

Just as I borrowed the title of this talk from a famous book, let me close with another fitting borrowed line that sums up my journey: "Just Do It."

My path has been a string of intentional resets, hitting the refresh button again and again. Not extraordinary, perhaps, but a life purposefully oriented toward continual growth and impact instead of being ordinary.

Thank you.

– ChatGPT –

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here today. Today, I want to share with you a journey—a journey that might not be extraordinary, but is certainly different than ordinary. My story is about hitting refresh, embracing change and seeking new opportunities.

Let me provide you with a bit of background. I started as a mechanical engineer, deeply passionate about machine design, especially the intricate art of modeling shapes on a computer using CAD. After pursuing my master's in the same field at Kansas State University, I landed a job in Boston within my domain. A year later, I returned home to Pune, working professionally in the same domain for a multinational corporation and climbing the ranks to a decent senior position.

One day, while perusing the Ascent, an advertisement caught my eye—a startup was taking root in Pune, and they were looking for their first employee. Intrigued by the prospect of more responsibilities and the chance to work with a CAD giant that had a significant presence in China, I joined as the inaugural team member. Little did I know that this decision marked the beginning of a series of resets.

Our first office was humble—a mere two tables and a manager's cabin in another company's office. As we assembled computers and set up shop, little did we anticipate that the CAD giant would eventually acquire us. Within the merged entity, I rose to become a group manager and site leader. Professionally, things were going well, but academically, I felt incomplete with only a master's degree. The desire for a PhD grew stronger.

I took the plunge into academia, enrolling for a PhD and becoming a full-time student, surrounded by peers half my age. This marked not only an economic reset but also a reset in authority. I successfully transitioned to teaching, specializing in the CAD domain, publishing international papers, and progressing well in my research.

Then, one day, a research paper presented a different approach to a sub-problem I was working on, sparking a realization—I needed to make another reset. I decided not to return to CAD for a job but to shift gears to Machine Learning (ML). This was my third reset, a move into uncharted territory at the age of 44-45. I started by working for startups without compensation, building my portfolio, delving into new domains like natural language processing, and engaging in corporate training and talks.

With each reset, I accumulated experience and skills, eventually landing the next job. After years in the ML field, I felt the urge for yet another change. The world of AI offered numerous opportunities, and I decided to venture out on my own—to become a consultant and coach. This marked my fourth reset. With a strong network on LinkedIn, I now had the luxury of being selective and focusing on high-impact contributions.

My journey has been a series of resets, all by design—hitting refresh, embracing change, and seeking new opportunities. It may not be an extraordinary story, but it is certainly different than ordinary.

In closing, let me borrow a title from a famous book and leave you with a tagline that sums up my journey—Just do it.

Thank you.

— Original –

I will be talking about my journey, not extraordinary but just different than ordinary.

Let me give you some background
I am a mechanical engineer, loved machine design, especially modelling shapes on computer, cad.. did masters in the same topic in US, Kansas State, got job in Boston in the same domain, did that for an year, then came back for good, continued working in the same domain professionally, in Pune (big constraint), in a MNC, got to decent senior position
One day saw adv in Ascent about a startup.. starting in Pune.. starting meaning there were no employees, someone from US office has come to start rnd in Pune, eventually I became the first employee.. the pull was, being startup more responsibilities, they were working for a cad giant and most influential was china, they had office there, I would get to work and visit china as well. Not just the usual us Europe working. That's first Refresh. As hour first office was nothing but 2 tables and mangers cabin in some other companies office. We assembled computer, did setup and started.. later the the cad giant acquired us. Rose in the merged entity to become a group manager and site leader. So, with the constraint of being in Pune, working for the best cad company, what else one can ask. So professionally things were ok, but one thing had not reached final stage, and that was academics, I only had masters, so thoughts of PhD started becoming stronger. I just wanted to have Dr before my name. Enrolled and started initially survey work etc. hafw way through first year, if I have to do effective PhD I will not be able to balance both the research and job. Decided to quit. Talked with the boss,

planned succession, and left. That's 2nd reset. I was a full time student now where in some callsee which one has to take and clear my peers were half my age. Big change, not just economic reset but authority reset. Recently as a doctoral scholarship become teacher and taught full semesters long courses. The domain of PhD as cad itself. Got decent number of international papers and things were going fine reasearch wise, suddenly one day, came across a paper that suggested a different approach to one sub problem I was working on...

That day I decided not to go back to cad for job, but to change to ML, my 3rd reset, refresh, ML was new, risky, had to learn from scratch, in ML job market I was a fresher at age 44-45. Started working for startups for free. Just to build portfolio, picked up new domain, natural language processing, teaching is best learning, started corporate training and talks, through that got next job, worked there for some years, and then time and desire came for the next move. So many opportunities in AI around, decided to take plunge to be on my own, a consultant, coach. That's 4th refresh. With decent networkin on LinkedIn, getting opportunities, now can afford to be selective, and chose High impact contributions.

So journey so far has been string of resets of hitting refresh, all by design. Not extraordinary but just different than ordinary.

Just as I borrowed title of this talk from a famous book, let me the talk with another borrowed tagline, which sums up my journey well... Is ... Just do it.

Thank you.