

Kunal Merchant is a strategy and management consultant based in San Francisco. In this capacity, Kunal provides strategic advisory, project management, public affairs, and communications support to a select portfolio of clients in sports, technology, development, and philanthropy.

With a specific focus on sports and entertainment, Kunal has advised NBA, NFL, MLS, NHL, and MLB clients, as well as several cities, sports consultancies, startups, and professional athletes. Most recently, Kunal was chief strategist for Nashville's successful 2017 bid for a Major League Soccer expansion club; advised Oak View Group on strategy and public policy; and managed Sacramento's ongoing bid to secure an MLS expansion club and develop a new downtown MLS stadium. Kunal previously served as a top executive for the Sacramento Kings, where he was central to the development of the Golden 1 Center, the first indoor sports venue to earn LEED Platinum designation.

Kunal previously served as Chief of Staff to former Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, where he was instrumental in the historic community effort to save the Sacramento Kings from relocation. Kunal also advised full range of the Mayor's strategic, policy and external relations activities, including the Greenwise initiative to generate 14,000 green jobs and \$1B in green investment in the Sacramento region by 2020.

Kunal was an Adjunct Professor at the University of San Francisco Graduate School of Sport Management, where he taught coursework on the intersection of sports and politics. In 2015, Kunal was featured in the ESPN Films 30 for 30 documentary Down in the Valley, which chronicled Sacramento's historic fight to save the Kings from relocation.

Kunal has previous experience in management consulting, education, health care and economic development. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University with an A.B. in Economics, and earned his M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.