



John Kao

Innovation activist and author of *Innovation Nation*, John Kao is one of the world's leading authorities on innovation, organizational transformation, and emerging technologies. Described as a "serial innovator" and "Mr. Creativity" by *The Economist*, Kao has been a trusted advisor on cutting-edge innovation strategies and best practices to Fortune 500 business leaders and government leaders around the world. He is known for his practical approach to "getting innovation done."

In his bestseller, *Jamming: The Art and Discipline of Business Creativity*, Kao, an accomplished jazz pianist, used the metaphor of the jam session to show how stimulating creativity and innovative thinking is a process that can be observed, replicated, taught and managed. Kao sounded the alarm about the erosion of America's competitiveness in the global economy in his latest book, *Innovation Nation: How America is Losing its Innovation Edge, Why It Matters, and What We Can Do To Get It Back*. *BusinessWeek* named it one of the best books of 2007. "Innovation is the key to any nation's future prosperity and security," says Kao. "The U.S. cannot hope to remain a leader without dramatic action that brings innovation to innovation."

Founder and CEO of Kao & Company, he works with organizations to achieve breakthrough, actionable insights on innovation and strategic transformation. His clients have included the governments of Singapore, Abu Dhabi and Finland and leading firms such as Nike, Intel and BASF. Kao also is chairman and founder of the Institute of Large Scale Innovation (ILSI), whose i20 group is an association of national chief innovation officers from around the world engaged in defining and spearheading a global innovation agenda. In 2009 he was named vice chairman of the World Economic Forum's Global Council on Innovation, and he advised the Clinton Global Initiative on its strategy and primary theme for its fifth annual meeting: innovation as a driver of global economic recovery and growth.

For 14 years he was a professor at Harvard Business School, where his elective on "Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Organizations" drew 2000 MBA students, and the executive program he developed and taught, "Enhancing Corporate Creativity," attracted top executives from companies such as Merck, Merrill Lynch, and Saudi Aramco. A graduate of Yale Medical School and Harvard Business School, Kao has started several companies in areas as diverse as biotechnology and multimedia. He also has been an angel investor in emerging technology companies and a Tony-nominated producer of film and stage, including *Sex, Lies and Videotape*. In 1969 he spent the summer playing keyboards for Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention.

His *Harvard Business Review* article on the globalization of innovation, "Tapping the World's Innovation Resources," was named one of the "most popular" of 2009. His work has been profiled in major publications, including *The New York Times*, and he has published three e-books, including *The Future is Yours to Invent*. He has appeared on such programs as CNBC's *Closing Bell* and *The Colbert Report*. His speeches on innovation are distinguished by their vivid call to arms as well as their pragmatic and original frameworks for action.