Parents Weekend
KAZUO INAMORI
Chairman of the Board
Kyocera Corporation

"There is no fixed boundary to human creative potential. You must become unshakably convinced that nothing is impossible... make your own considered judgments independent of others common sense... and in all your endeavors strive to position yourself in the center of the whirlpool."

That is just a small part of the philosophy of Kazuo Inamori, the 56-year-old entrepreneurial visionary who has turned creativity into a creed, a crusade, and a powerful profit center. Inamori parlayed a three million yen investment founding Kyota Ceramics into Kyocera, now capitalized at 34 billion yen.

Kazuo Inamori has built an R&D venture business dedicated to fine ceramic engineering into a multinational, high-tech conglomerate employing 16,000. His companies define the frontiers in a dozen fields of ceramic research, aiming at breakthrough technologies for communication, imaging systems, and energy generation.

Determined that Japan must soon begin to contribute solutions to urgent world problems, Inamori pursues three synergistic careers to accelerate the process. As president of Inamori Foundation, whose 4.5 billion yen endowment backs the Nobel-class Kyoto Prize, he is focusing research on targeted problem areas with annual grants and awards totaling over 200 million yen for work in basic sciences, advanced technology, and expressed arts. As CEO of an infant, yet fast-moving telecommunications network, Dainidenden, he is spinning an information and research matrix that could help define a century. And as chairman and primary stockholder of Kyocera, he has the funds, labs, and factories to see a wide variety of new concepts through to concrete social fruition.

Kazuo Inamori has become a powerful force in Japan's economic development and, to an even greater degree, a concerned citizen of the world.
EDWARD LOWE
Chairman
Edward Lowe Industries, Inc.

Edward Lowe Industries, under the leadership of founder Edward Lowe, is today a sophisticated packaged goods company that competes successfully in national and international markets.

In 1947, the standard cat box filler was ashes. When a neighbor, tired of sooty paw prints throughout her house, asked Lowe for sand, the industrial absorbents salesman suggested clay. The neighbor, delighted with the clay’s absorbency, kept coming back for more, and Kitty Litter brand was born.

Betting that other cat owners would also like this new cat box filler, Lowe filled ten brown bags with absorbent clay, wrote the name Kitty Litter on them, and called on a local pet store. With sand available for next to nothing, the shop owner doubted that anyone would pay 65 cents for a five-pound bag of clay. “So, give it away,” said Lowe. Soon, customers asked for Kitty Litter by name and were willing to pay for it.

The small business begun by Edward Lowe is today a three-billion dollar industry, and he presides over the industry’s largest manufacturer with sales over $100 million annually.

Lowe’s success can be attributed to many factors. One is his continual push for innovation. He has patented a system to make his cat box fillers 99 percent dust-free, a convenience and health improvement for cats and their owners.

An entrepreneur at heart, Lowe is now turning his interest to the establishment of the Edward Lowe Foundation and Business Opportunity Center. The center will serve as a clearing house to bring together entrepreneurs, investors, and financial institutions for the mutual benefit of all. It is just one of many plans Lowe has for the future.
J. WILLARD MARRIOTT, JR.
Chairman of the Board and President
Marriott Corporation

Since J. Willard Marriott became president of the Marriott Corporation in 1964, the company has grown at an annual compounded rate of approximately 20 percent in sales, net income, earnings per share, and stock price. In 1964, Marriott employed 9,600; today, there are over 200,000 employees, one of the 10 largest employers in America.

Marriott has become a diversified lodging and food company, with operations and franchises in 50 states and 27 countries. Its businesses include over 175 full-service hotels and resorts, a rapidly growing chain of moderate-priced hotels, more than 1,500 fast-food restaurants, over 2,000 institutional food service accounts (including Babson), airport terminal operations, and a fleet of cruise ships.

According to Marriott, the company's ongoing strategy for success has four key parts. First, the company carefully selects market segments for growth, within lodging, food service, and related businesses. He feels that the success of the organization depends on operating the businesses they know best — lodging and food services. Each has annual sales in the U.S. of over $40 billion.

Part two of the strategy is to look at all expansion opportunities in those segments Marriott selects for growth, proceeding by internal development or selective acquisition.

The third part of the Marriott strategy is to build customer loyalty through exceptional service. "We want to be the first choice of customers in each of our businesses," says Marriott, "and we work at it!"

The fourth, and what Marriott feels to be the most important strategic element, is to recognize and develop Marriott employees. "Some say you should be more sensitive when you deal with creative people," he says, "but I think you have to be sensitive when you deal with anybody. Sensitivity to people on the part of management is very important." And it's been that sensitivity to their employees that has made Marriott one of the leading corporations in America.