Safi Bahcall

Award-Winning Physicist, Biotech Entrepreneur, and Author of Loonshots

Why do good teams kill great ideas? Safi Bahcall, a physicist and entrepreneur, reveals a surprising new way of thinking about group behavior that challenges everything we thought we knew about nurturing radical breakthroughs. Drawing on the science of phase transitions, and using stories that range from the hunt for U-boats in WWII to the search for new cancer drugs, Bahcall shows why teams, companies, or any group with a mission will suddenly change from embracing wild new ideas to rejecting them.

An entertaining and compelling presenter, Bahcall describes this new kind of science and shares three techniques that creatives, leaders, and visionaries can use to liberate the innovative ideas – or loonshots – trapped inside small and large companies everywhere.

Bahcall's first book *Loonshots: How to Nurture the Crazy Ideas that Win Wars, Cure Diseases, and Transform Industries*, was an instant *Wall Street Journal* bestseller and has been translated into 18 languages, recommended by Bill Gates and Daniel Kahneman, and selected as a best business book of the year by Amazon, Bloomberg, *Financial Times*, *Forbes, Inc.*, *Medium*, *Tech Crunch*, *Strategy + Business*, and *Washington Post*. *Loonshots* was also the most recommended book of the year in Bloomberg's annual survey of CEOs and entrepreneurs.

Senator Bob Kerrey wrote: "If *The Da Vinci Code* and *Freakonomics* had a child together, it would be called *Loonshots*."

Bahcall received his BA from Harvard *summa cum laude* and completed his PhD in physics at Stanford. He spent nearly two decades of his life bringing innovative ideas to fruition as a consultant at McKinsey & Company and co-founder and CEO of Synta Pharmaceuticals – a biotechnology company developing new drugs for cancer. He led the company's IPO and served as its CEO for 13 years, during which he was named the Ernst & Young New England Biotechnology Entrepreneur of the Year. Bahcall also worked with President Obama's council of science advisors (PCAST) on the future of national research.