

## IT'S IRONIC AND FOOLHARDY: THE US TRAINS HIGHLY-SKILLED IMMIGRANTS AND THEN KICKS THEM OUT OF THE COUNTRY



America's immigrant exodus, in which highly-skilled workers are forced to leave the country, as they are unable to obtain permanent residency here, is causing the country a huge loss in entrepreneurial ability that has the ability to create businesses and jobs. What makes it even more paradoxical is that these people have been trained in our own Universities, yet we are unable to use their expertise, owing to archaic immigration laws that scream for reform, but which the policy makers are failing to address. The talented immigrants who leave for their own shores, or other countries that are more understanding and welcoming of their talents include, engineers, doctors, computer experts, lawyers and teachers. Technology entrepreneurship is on the rise in India, China and also in Russia, because the people who are trained in the US are more welcome there. Given the choice they would much rather stay in the US, but the country just will not give them the visas. Rather than see the value that these immigrants values will bring to the country, politicians, with their internal bickering and pandering to their constituencies, would rather pander to their belief that these people are best out of the country as they will eat into the jobs that the locals could be doing, even though survey after survey has revealed that there is a huge shortage of highly-skilled workers in the country and most jobs that require such workers are going unfilled. In a new book by author Vivek Wadhwa "The Immigrant Exodus: Why America Is Losing the Global Race to Capture Entrepreneurial Talent," the author laments that in a country that was built on the talents of immigrants, it is shedding its centuries old policy of welcoming immigrants. It is from among these immigrants that the US is going to get its next outstanding entrepreneur, scientist, doctor, lawyer, or teacher? He says that there are tens of thousands of highly skilled immigrants who want to stay on in the country and contribute to its growth and development, but are unable to do so owing to convoluted and outmoded immigration laws. For long the US was known as the place that all immigrants longed to reach. But that appeal is now receding. A new study co-authored by Wadhwa and released by the Kauffman Foundation shows that there is a decline in immigrant founded companies in the US. Dane Stangler, director of Research and Policy at the Kauffman Foundation, said that there is strong statistical support that the country's unfriendly immigration system and the inhospitable environment has led to a 'reverse brain drain.' He went on to say that immigrant entrepreneurs were most likely to start companies in the innovation/ manufacturing-related services and software industries and would create tens of thousands of jobs. Companies started by such immigrants generated \$63 billion in sales between 2006 and 2012. Wadhwa said the contribution of skilled immigrants to making the country competitive is immense. By starting an extraordinary number of companies and through their innovative skills they have given the country a competitive edge. Both the political parties have to share the blame. Both the Democrats and the Republicans understand that the country need them, however, both are caught in a quandary. The Democrats are perceived as pro-immigrant workers whilst the Republicans are seen as anti-illegals and any decision regarding the highly-skilled immigrants will be seen through these myopic political frames. "We bring people in as students, we bring them in to work for American companies, but we won't let them stay beyond a short period of time," he said.