

# VIEWPOINT

The Business Journal welcomes letters to the editor

Send letters to the Silicon Valley Business Journal  
125 S. Market St., 11th Floor, San Jose, CA 95113  
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## POLL



### WHY DO AMERICANS LIKE SMALL BIZ?

Recent research by Gallup shows that 70 percent of Americans have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in small businesses. Here are the reasons that respondents to the Gallup poll gave as to why they are so confident:

**29%**

American dream; backbone of the economy

**28%**

Personally invested; determined; accountable to customers

**14%**

Create jobs for local people; community involvement

**13%**

Respondent or family owns/owned small business

**7%**

Had positive experience working for small business

**5%**

Ingenuity; innovation

**2%**

Trustworthy

**1%**

Trump's involvement with

**1%**

Positive experiences dealing with small businesses

**6%**

Other

**<1%**

None

**2%**

No opinion

PERCENTAGES TOTAL MORE THAN 100% DUE TO MULTIPLE RESPONSES  
GALLUP, JULY 5-9, 2017

## ▶ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Business Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Please send your thoughts to the contact information listed above.

The best letters are short, usually less than 300 words, and make a point clearly. We reserve the right to edit and/or reject submissions. All letters must include the author's name and a way to contact the author.

## GUEST COLUMN



GETTY IMAGES

# Our real competitive advantage

## IMMIGRANTS FORM THE BACKBONE OF MANY SV BUSINESSES

President Donald Trump continues to shine a bright and polarizing spotlight on U.S. immigration policies.

Trump's early proposals to halt travel to the United States from six Muslim-majority countries, his more recent changes to H-1B visas, proposals delaying the International Entrepreneur Rule, the new Cotton-Perdue plan, and this week's steps to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program are all strong indications that restricting immigration is a top priority for the administration. These policies are already showing an impact on Silicon Valley and the broader U.S. economy, and could ultimately result in the loss of our competitive advantage.

The United States is home to more than 26 million immigrant workers; 17 percent of the U.S. workforce. Millions of people have come to the United States to pursue the American dream and start the next chapter in their lives. I also immigrated to the United States nearly 30 years ago to pursue this dream.

I was born and raised in the rural town of Ness Ziona, Israel, and was drafted into the Israeli Special Forces at age 18. In the military, I learned invaluable lessons on leadership and a guiding principle that has stayed with me throughout the years – Who Dares, Wins.

When I arrived in this country to go to Harvard Business School, I was eager to disrupt the status quo. I took advantage of the vast educational opportunities, which



Zack Rinat is a founder of Redwood City-based Model N, serving as CEO and executive chairman. Previously, Rinat co-

founded and served as CEO and president of NetDynamics Inc. before its acquisition by Sun Microsystems.

were made possible to me via a student visa. After graduating HBS, I was able to remain through a H-1 visa at Silicon Graphics. I embraced the open business climate in Silicon Valley and leveraged my background and a diverse workforce to build successful, innovative companies, including NetDynamics, TradingDynamics, Conduit and Model N. It's because of my background that I was able to identify the challenges facing global companies and develop the technology needed to improve them.

I'm not the only entrepreneur to credit his or her background's impact on their success. Elon Musk immigrated from South Africa before he founded Tesla and SpaceX, Pierre Omidyar moved to the United States from France before he started eBay, and Andy Grove immigrated from Hungary before he co-founded Intel. These are only a few of the most well-known immigrants who have created companies and helped make Silicon Valley – and a sizable chunk of the U.S. economy – what it

is today.

A study from the National Foundation for American Policy found that 51 percent of the highest-valued startups in the United States were founded by immigrants. The top 44 of these companies are collectively valued at \$168 billion and create an average of roughly 760 jobs each.

Immigrants aren't just creating companies and technologies that improve consumers' lives, they are creating thousands of jobs and boosting our economy. In fact, immigrants are twice as likely to start their own businesses, which added about \$2 trillion to the American economy last year.

If immigrants like Musk, Omidyar, Grove and thousands of others hadn't moved to the United States, would Silicon Valley be what it is today? Would we still be considered the tech capital of the world?

The United States was founded by immigrants. This diverse foundation is what makes us the best nation in the world. For Silicon Valley, immigration is what makes our region so innovative.

If the current White House is successful in restricting thousands of intelligent men and women from coming here to work and grow the economy, we'll open the door for them to take their dreams, passion, intelligence and skills somewhere else. They'll find opportunities in other countries and invest their talent elsewhere. They'll become our competition rather than our competitive advantage.