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From Afghan Refugee to Vice President of a US Bank:

An Immigrant's Perspective on Solving the Immigration Crisis

From the KKK's anti-immigrant protests to counter-protests about the rights of immigrants; from stalled immigration reform; to the issue of migrant children risking their lives to escape violence in Central America and then facing deportation upon arrival to the US—in recent months the debate over immigration has taken centre stage.

As a former refugee and immigrant from Afghanistan, award-winning author Atta Arghandiwal has a first-hand understanding of the immigrant experience. After immigrating to the US from a refugee camp in Germany he built a 28 year career to become vice president of a major bank. Motivated by a strong desire to help other immigrants, Arghandiwal wrote *Immigrant Success Planning*, a comprehensive resource guide that would help immigrants in building a new life in a new country.

Amid the calls for closed and more open borders, news stories about the over-policing of immigrants, protests and counter-protests, Arghandiwal has remained a strong advocate for empowering immigrants. According to Arghandiwal finding ways for the successful integration of immigrants into communities across the US is key to easing tensions. Empowering immigrants, not alienating or marginalizing them, is key to effective immigration policies, explains Arghandiwal.

Passionate about helping newcomers in becoming prosperous and contributing to their communities, Arghandiwal decided to write a book that would act as a guide for immigrants, titled *Immigrant Success Planning*. The launch for the book in California was attended by over 100 political, business and community leaders.

Through the book, as well as through a series of **Free Online Seminars** via which immigrants can directly ask questions, Arghandiwal aims to create a hub of resources that immigrants anywhere can access easily. He also hopes that in the current debate around immigration, however loud and heated, voices of former refugees and immigrants will also be heard.

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About Atta:

Atta Arghandiwal was born in Afghanistan but left shortly after the Soviet invasion and became a refugee in Germany. Two weeks after his arrival in the US, he started work as a bank teller, and built a successful twenty-eight year career, eventually being promoted to senior vice president. He is the author of the award-winning memoir *"Lost Decency: The Untold Afghan Story"* and lives in Northern California with his wife and two children.