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## How Does Canada Stop Losing Its 'Best Minds'?

An interview with **Dan Breznitz**, Professor and Munk Chair of Innovation Studies  
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One thing that is important to understand about the speed of government and the speed of business is, A, we actually want government to be slower because business goes around breaking things and all the rest, it's great. But government or policy public policy is responsible for all Canadians. So you don't want to have complete entrepreneurial behaviour. What you do want is changes, and smart changes. It means taking the main tools that we have now and maybe even eliminating them, taking the money, trying something else because we are failing. And this can be done quite quickly. The best of all worlds and the best countries, if a company comes with an idea and they need support, within a month to four months you already have help.

Where we might want to be able to do things more quickly is our regulatory system. We have a federal government but our provinces are a lot stronger than American states, and there is a mismatch of regulations that make it really difficult to sell all around Canada product, and much easier to just sell to the whole United States. Add to that the United States, it's 10 times more of a population, and the population is a lot richer.

Most Canadian companies will say, "Why should we even attempt to do something in Canada?" And we are losing our best companies and our best



minds. What government really needs to do is first equip those agents of innovation with the skills necessary. So through education, through the right financial system, through the right regulatory system, through the right coordination with other actors. And that necessitates an ability by the government to work constantly with the changing partners with sometimes radical ideas and sometimes thinking, because it's always long term, when those partners do not exist sometimes actually creating them.