

Hard to find skilled US workers: AT&T CEO

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San Antonio, March 27: The head of the top US phone company AT&T Inc said on Wednesday it was having trouble finding enough skilled workers to fill all the 5,000 customer service jobs it promised to return to the United States from India.

"We're having trouble finding the numbers that we need with the skills that are required to do these jobs," AT&T Chief Executive Randall Stephenson told a business group in San Antonio, where the company's headquarters is located.

So far, only around 1,400 jobs have been returned to the United States of 5,000, a target it set in 2006, the company said, adding that it maintains the target.

Stephenson said he is especially distressed that in some communities and among certain groups, the high school drop out rate is as high as 50 percent. The United States needed to make solving that problem a priority, he said.

"If I had a business that half the product we turned out was defective or you couldn't put into the marketplace, I would shut that business down," he said.

Gone are the days, he said, when AT&T and other US [Companies](#) had to hire locally.

"We're able to do new product engineering in Bangalore as easily as we're able to do it in Austin, Texas," he said, referring to the Indian city where many international [Companies](#) have outsourced technical and customer support workers.

"I know you don't like hearing that, but that's the way it is."

