



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 6, 2017

AT&T Agrees to “Re-source” Jobs Back to United States

The union representing AT&T workers in five southern states [announced on Thursday](#) that it had reached a tentative agreement with AT&T Southwest that includes a promise to hire 3,000 American workers to do jobs previously done overseas.

It's a four-year deal that includes wage increases, paid parental leave, and sweetened healthcare benefits for some 20,000 AT&T workers. It'll become effective after the union membership approves it.



There was some apparent reluctance on the part of the company to include the resourcing, as its statement didn't mention it: “[The agreement] maintains one of the most robust health care plans in the nation ... [and] includes two weeks of paid parental leave to help mothers or fathers bond with a newborn or newly adopted child.”

But the company apparently had little room to maneuver during negotiations. First, CWA reminded top management that AT&T has “chosen to cut more than 8,000 call center jobs [in the United States] and offshore thousands of [them] to Mexico” and several other countries since 2011. The union said that “AT&T is underestimating the deep frustration wireless retail, call center and field workers are feeling right now with its decisions to squeeze workers and customers.” And then, added the union: “The company just reported more than \$13 billion in annual profits” making it hard for the company to point out that labor costs in Mexico are significantly lower (averaging about \$2 an hour last year) as justification for the cuts and the moves offshore.

In the background of those discussions are the promises the White House has made regarding job creation. In a statement from the White House, Trump has “outlined a bold plan to create 25 million new American jobs in the next decade and return to 4 percent annual economic growth.”

And then there's Rasmussen Reports, which just announced the results of its latest survey of Americans, indicating support for Trump's job-creating agenda. When 1,000 Americans were asked, “Among the action items in the president's [inaugural] speech, which is most important — creating more jobs, cutting taxes, repealing and replacing ObamaCare, reducing illegal immigration, launching an infrastructure plan to rebuild America's roads, bridges and tunnels, defeating radical Islam or something else?” they said jobs were the most important.

In an economy currently employing more than 150 million people, 3,000 jobs coming back is insignificant. But AT&T Southwest's 20,000 workers represent a small fraction of the 275,000 people employed by all of the company's divisions and other union negotiators are likely taking notice of the present tentative agreement in crafting their own negotiations when employment agreements expire elsewhere.

It's just one more indicator that President Trump means business — pun intended — and companies such as AT&T are responding accordingly.



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