

Grace Buenrostro

Director of People & Operations | Recruiting Leader | Organizational Strategist

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Professional Summary

Experienced People & Operations leader with a track record of building and scaling recruiting systems, optimizing organizational processes, and driving high-impact people strategies. Skilled in leading full-cycle recruiting, designing talent pipelines, implementing AI tools, and coaching hiring teams through structured and technical interviews. Known for aligning people operations with company growth goals while enhancing the employee experience, compliance, and culture. Trusted advisor to executive leadership with experience in consulting, high-growth, and remote-first environments.

Core Competencies

- Full-Cycle Recruiting & Talent Strategy
- Organizational Design & Workforce Planning
- Structured & Technical Interviewing
- Performance Management & Engagement
- Leadership Coaching & People Operations
- HR Compliance & Policy Development
- ATS & HRIS Systems (Greenhouse, Workday, Lever)
- AI Recruiting Tools (Popp AI)
- Remote & Hybrid Team Enablement
- Cross-Functional Stakeholder Management

Professional Experience

TD Thornton

Director of People & Operations | Oakland, CA | Dec 2023 – Jul 2025

- Oversaw People & Operations strategy for a consulting firm managing \$1B+ in

infrastructure and utility projects.

- Designed and led the recruiting strategy, including implementation of Popp AI and creation of a scalable talent pipeline.
- Reduced time-to-hire by streamlining interview processes and introducing structured and technical interview training.
- Championed company-wide performance evaluation and feedback programs, contributing to 90% employee retention.
- Partnered with leadership on compensation planning, DEI strategy, and compliance across multi-state operations.

People & Operations Manager | Oakland, CA | Jan 2021 – Dec 2023

- Led all recruiting and HR functions for a fast-growing consulting team, scaling from 9 to 60 employees.
- Built just-in-time hiring pipelines and supported client staffing needs through workforce planning.
- Developed recruiting assets and templates, coached hiring managers, and optimized candidate experience.
- Supported compliance and onboarding processes for a fully remote, multi-state workforce.

Senior Administrative Specialist | Oakland, CA | Jun 2018 – Jan 2021

- Supported executive leadership with scheduling, onboarding coordination, and candidate communication.
- Played a key role in early HR systems implementation and internal operations scaling.

Jade Orchard – Digital Marketing Agency

Office Manager | Oakland, CA | Mar 2017 – Jan 2019

- Managed internal operations and recruiting for a remote marketing agency.
- Handled candidate sourcing, interview coordination, onboarding, and employee documentation.
- Supported the CEO with vendor management and executive operations.

St. Paul's Towers – Episcopal Senior Communities

Senior Living Counselor & Coordinator | Oakland, CA | Mar 2014 – Mar 2017

- Managed new resident onboarding and sales, closing over \$1M in contracts.
- Led outreach, admissions coordination, and internal staff collaboration to improve resident experience.

Education

Santa Clara University

Bachelor of Science in Business Management

Minor in English

Tools & Platforms

- Popp AI
- Lever ATS
- TriNet HRIS
- Slack
- LinkedIn Recruiter
- Expensify
- Zywave LMS
- T-Sheets
- Asana
- HubSpot