



MORRISON & COMPANY

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Seven Ways Not to Get Hired

Our experience in recruitment has led to wisdom in what makes a great candidate – and ways not to get hired.

Finding Talent

Morrison & Company has grown our recruitment practice, helping companies throughout the United States find the perfect fit for critical open positions.

Morrison Snapshots



Over the past few months, we have traveled with our team to some great conferences, taken part in local events, and even spent time with Karen Ross, California Secretary of Agriculture.

In this snapshot, Morrison Principal Geoff Chinnock is enjoying time with Steve Burnett, partner at Gallina, and California State Assembly Member Diane Harkey.

A Legacy of Sustainability and Stewardship from Seed to Store



This time of year, the small, sleepy Northern California community of Richvale is beginning to bustle, with preparations underway for the planting of a new rice crop. The main roadway will soon be flanked by a vibrant sea of green, signaling the sprouting of new life, and for Lundberg Family Farms, the start of their sustainably-grown rice's journey from seed to store shelf.

Headquartered in the town whose name means "fertile valley," the Lundberg family has grown rice for more than 75 years, with a dedication to stewardship of the land and a focus on producing a healthy and quality product. Albert and Frances Lundberg started farming in the Northern Sacramento Valley in 1937 with a commitment to these principles, with sons Eldon, Wendell, Harlan and Homer Lundberg carrying that vision forward when they began the Lundberg Family Farms brand in the 1960's.

Today, the third generation company manages more than 16,000 acres of rice under cultivation – 70 percent of which is organic, the remaining "eco-farmed" – and has propelled Lundberg to become one of the top rice brands in the United States.

This achievement has been advanced, in part, due to the company's attention to product innovation. In 2012, Lundberg Family Farms started transitioning the standard lay down pillow bags that their rice was sold in to stand up pouches with a re-closable Velcro zipper. Lundberg was the first food product in the U.S. to unveil this product innovation.

Over the past several months, Lundberg has reinvigorated their organic rice lines with new and expanded product offerings. Lundberg Rice Chips have kept customers snacking for more than a decade and now have a partner on the shelf in Lundberg Multigrain Chips, made with rice, quinoa, garbanzo beans, and chia seeds and boasting bold flavors like Mojave Jalapeno and Shasta Chipotle Lime.



Lundberg also recently introduced a line of Organic Brown Rice Pasta and Sauce Mix, the only boxed pasta and sauce products that are vegan, whole grain, organic, and dairy-free.



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Furthermore, a new line of rice entrées was released last September, coming in 11 different flavors and all featuring the family's signature organic brown rice.

In addition to being a leading producer of organic and natural rice products, Lundberg Family Farms has been the pacesetter for sustainable farming and energy-efficient processing practices and has been recognized for fostering a stellar workplace for employees.

Morrison & Company is privileged to call Lundberg Family Farms a client and has assisted with a number of projects such as an evaluation of the finance department's functions and procedures, including best in class comparisons and development of new procedures and manuals; a review and recommendations regarding the handling of sales deductions taken by buyers, and; a general review of the overall organizational structure.

SEVEN WAYS NOT TO GET HIRED

By Brent Morrison, Managing Principal

I hired my first person when I was 19. Including organizations Morrison & Company assists with searches, the companies I've worked for, and our own needs I can safely say I've probably been involved in hiring hundreds. I've learned that there are a lot of ways to miss a job opportunity; here are some of the best:

- 1. Have an incomprehensible resume.** It has been standard advice in some circles to make a catalog of accomplishments and skills the focus of a resume, followed by a brief list of employers and dates. Don't. A bunch of disconnected accomplishments doesn't tell anyone much. It matters whether you "Exceeded expectations for budget efficiency" right out of college twenty years ago or last year as CFO.
- 2. Don't explain short stays or gaps on your resume.** I have a resume on my desk that shows multiple jobs with short stays and no explanation. Not real enticing but there may be a good explanation: I recently took a chance and contacted a candidate who listed four jobs over the previous 11 years. It turned out he worked for a company that had been acquired and stayed with the acquiring company, was later assigned to a partner of his employer for a two-year project, then came back to a different unit of the company. It had been only one employer but you wouldn't guess it from his resume. He's lucky I decided to call anyway.
- 3. Use a boilerplate cover letter.** It's OK to start with a template but for Pete's sake don't address it to "Dear {Name Here}." And use the name of the company if you have it, not "Employing Company." Note the position you are applying for and don't say you're the best candidate for the job if you don't seem to know what it is.
- 4. Don't explain why you're applying for a job in a state in which you've apparently never been.** I recently received a very strong resume for a position in California. The applicant went to colleges in Connecticut, belongs to organizations in Connecticut, and has worked his entire 20+ year career in Connecticut. I'm not going to call.

A few years ago I received a resume from a candidate who had lived his entire life in Utah but explained that his wife's family lived near the hiring company and they wished to move nearby before starting a family. He was eventually hired.

- 5. Treat recruiters like your enemy.** It is true that the recruiter works for the company, not you, but the recruiter wants the best candidates; making end runs or being adversarial won't get you on that list. In an extreme case, a candidate who didn't pass our initial screening showed up at the company's offices anyway. Several times, over several weeks. He was finally offered an opportunity – to meet some of the area's finest law enforcement officers. This is an extreme but remember the recruiter wants to please his or her client. Make yourself pleasing.
- 6. Don't research the company.** I've been around long enough to remember when this was hard. I once spent over 40 hours preparing for an interview, learning about the company and its industry, history, key personnel, and anything else I could find. Today that level of research might take an afternoon – if you include a nap. At the very least, don't ask questions that could have been answered by spending 20 minutes on the company's website.
- 7. Lie.** I once asked a candidate with a stellar background who had recently become unemployed why he left his last job. His answer: "I was fired." He explained that a new CEO had let a number of senior officers go to bring in his own team, a fact I was able to verify. If he had danced around it I'd have likely thought the worst. This honest and superbly qualified candidate got the job. Into every career some rain will fall; handle it honestly.

I could add "Submit your resume in a foreign language even if you have no reason to believe the interviewer speaks it" or "Include a photo of your vintage Pontiac" (true stories), but these ought to do it. If you do these and get hired anyway it will be a sure sign the economy has recovered.

FINDING TALENT:

“You’re only as good as the people you hire.” – Ray Kroc

Perhaps the toughest thing a business does is hire. It’s no fun for anyone: the employer is pressured to find the best fit and the candidate is fighting back nerves. It can seem like a prosecutor grilling a defendant to both parties, no matter how cordial the interview is.

But a successful hire starts long before the interview. Most companies have a good idea of the skillsets they need but can struggle finding the right candidates. Some jobs are simply unique; as this is written Morrison & Company is recruiting for a client position that combines business office skills and knowledge of heavy equipment. But whether the position is clear-cut or unusual, the hardest thing to gauge is the right cultural fit.

A study of 20,000 new hires by the leadership training firm Leadership IQ found that when a new hire fails, attitudinal (or cultural) problems were to blame 89% of the time. Aside from a strong technical background, a company needs someone who fits well with its team and its vision.

There can also be special needs. Pacific Coast Producers is the largest producer of private label canned fruit and tomato products in the United States. When their controller of over 20 years retired, the company’s CFO needed a controller who could not only manage their accounting operations but also have the global business vision and insight to eventually be a strong CFO candidate.

Calamco, a large west coast distributor of ammonia-based fertilizers, faced a similar situation. With the company’s two top executives expecting to retire within five years, and at about the same time, the company needed more than

just a strong CFO: they needed a CFO who could quickly develop into a solid CEO candidate.

The Hignell Companies faced a different challenge in filling its CFO position. Its varied businesses include residential property management, commercial property management, remodeling and new construction, home repair and maintenance, homeowners’ association (HOA) management, and an assisted living community. The company employs about 160 people and its culture is particularly important to both its business and its community-focused mission.

Amalgamated Sugar Company (headquartered in Boise, Idaho), is the second largest processor of sugar from sugar beets in the United States. The company has a stable senior management team with long average tenures. When the CFO retired after 33 years, Morrison was asked to find a candidate who could fill some pretty large shoes and mentor young talent.

Unlike traditional search firms, our contacts are known to us professionally or personally and we do not depend on databases acquired from other sources, internet employee lists, or cold calls to find candidates. We know them or we know the people who refer them. We make cultural fit as high a priority as technical qualifications. Our Interim/Outsource professionals can also fill a temporary vacancy or help break in a new team member in some disciplines. We’ve helped hire positions including CEO, CFO, Controller, Operations Director, Director of Labor Relations, Ranch Manager, and others.

To learn more about our recruitment services and for full case studies on Pacific Coast Producers, Calamco, The Hignell Companies, and Amalgamated Sugar, visit the Recruitment page at Morrisonco.net.



“The CFO position is critical to Calamco, particularly with transitions expected in the next five years. We were pleased with both the process in working with Morrison and the range of candidates they presented. Most importantly, I am extremely pleased with the candidate who joined the Calamco team as our new CFO.”

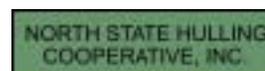
Bob Brown, President/CEO, Calamco



“I had the confidence that working with a professional company such as Morrison & Company would allow me the time to continue to focus on running the business during this important transition of the CFO role. They provided everything I expected and then some. Thanks, Morrison & Company.”

Philip Larios, President/CEO, The Hignell Companies

Welcome
New
Clients!



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Morrison & Company Snapshots



Geoff Chinnock & Tim Peters from the Morrison Team supported the Butte County Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers in their favorite fundraising event of the year: the annual clay shoot. Brendon Flynn from Pacific Farms and Orchards, Cliff Little from Agromillora, and Rick Rhody from Sun Valley Rice rounded out our team and helped boost our score.

Karen Ross, California Secretary of Ag, made a stop in Chico in February to meet with Chico State students and local community leaders. Colleen Cecil, Executive Director for the Butte County Farm Bureau and Secretary Ross joined Toni Scott for a picture.



The Chico Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner was a hit with the Morrison Team!



Our team had a great time at the Butte County Farm Bureau Annual Dinner in February. Morrison Consultant and Butte County Farm Bureau Board Director Toni Scott is pictured here with Ryan Cheung of Matson and Isom and Scott Stoller, Manager of the Silver Dollar Fair.



Geoff Chinnock and Toni Scott took a quick break from the Ag Council of California and CoBank Annual Meeting in Huntington Beach to smell the sweet salty ocean air.

Morrison & Company specializes in planning and feasibility, interm/outsourc assistance, recruitment, special projects, and grants.