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From Executive Assistant to Leadership Evolving Roles in Independent Schools



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About Me

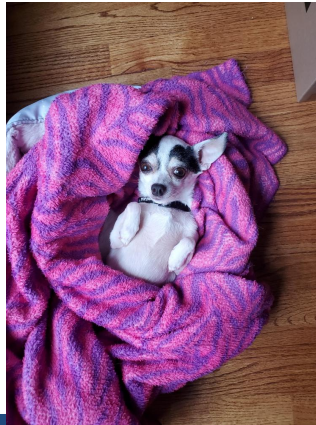
Strategic. Organized. Ninja-Level Multitasker.
Email & Calendar Wrangler. Crisis Diffuser.
Planner of Events, Finder of Things, Unofficial Counselor,
Mentor, etc.



23+ years in independent schools—and still smiling.
Executive Assistant to the Head of School & CFO at
Providence Day.

Known to run on positivity, good data, and lots of humor.

When I'm not working, I love working out, walking and
playing with my dogs, reading, dancing, spending time
with my husband and planning my next move!





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Today's Topics

1. The Evolving Landscape of Independent Schools
2. Your Untapped Potential: Recognizing Your Strengths
3. Exploring Leadership Pathways
 - Chief of Staff / Administrative Operations
 - Strategic Initiative Manager
 - Chief Operating Officer (COO)
4. Gaining Momentum: Key Skills for Leadership
5. Making Your Mark: Increasing Visibility and Influence
6. Your Next Steps: Actionable Strategies for Growth
7. Q&A



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The Evolving Landscape of Independent Schools

Independent Schools Today

Schools are becoming more complex:

- Increased regulations
- Evolving technology
- Diverse student needs

Leadership needs are changing:

- More strategic thinking required
- Greater emphasis on data
- Need for adaptable problem-solvers

Opportunity for EAs: Your skills are more valuable than ever!



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Recognizing Your Strengths

You already have key skills:

- Organization and time management
- Strong organizational and communication skills
- Proactive problem-solving and initiative
- Relationship building
- Institutional knowledge
- Understanding of the school's culture

**Your
Untapped Potential**

These are the building blocks of leadership!



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Exploring New Paths

Chief of Staff/Administrative Operations

What is a Chief of Staff/Administrative Operations?

- The Head of School's right hand.
- Managing special projects and initiatives.
- Facilitating communication and alignment across departments.
- Handling sensitive and confidential information.

How EAs can move into this role:

- Take on project management tasks.
- Improve communication between departments.
- Anticipate the needs of the Head of School and leadership.



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Exploring New Paths Strategic Initiative Manager

What is a Strategic Initiative Manager?

- Leading and implementing key strategic projects.
- Analyzing data and providing insights for decision-making.
- Developing and monitoring project timelines and budgets.
- Collaborating with stakeholders to achieve strategic goals.

How EAs can move into this role:

- Get involved in planning processes.
- Learn to identify what data and where to gather.
- Volunteer for new projects.



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Exploring New Paths Chief Operating Officer (COO)

What is a COO?

- Oversees the school's daily operations.
- Manages finances, facilities, and staff.
- Ensuring efficient and effective administrative processes.
- Driving operational excellence and continuous improvement.

How EAs can move into this role:

- Develop financial skills.
- Understand your schools metrics and how to report.
- Learn about HR and operations.
- Seek opportunities to manage budgets and special projects.



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Gaining Momentum: Key Skills For Advancement

Building Your Toolkit

- Strategic Thinking: See the big picture.
- Project Management: Lead and organize.
- Financial Literacy: Understand your school's key financial metrics.
- Data Analysis: Using data to inform decisions.
- Leadership & Team Management: Guide and motivate.
- Communication & Negotiation: Effectively conveying ideas and resolving conflicts
- Technology Proficiency: Stay current with relevant software and tools.



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Making Your Mark: Increasing Visibility and Influence

Be Seen and Heard

- Volunteer and lead for cross-departmental projects.
- Participate and attend school-wide events.
- Present ideas and solutions to leadership. Build relationships across your school community & with administrators, board members, & stakeholders.
- Seek mentorship and professional development opportunities.
- Be Curious!



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Your Action Plan

Charting Your Course

- Identify your career goals and aspirations.
- Create a professional development plan.
- Seek feedback from supervisors and colleagues.
- Seek mentorship opportunities.
- Network with other professionals in your field or fields you aspire to work and share ideas and your interests.
- Take advantage of training, professional development, and certification programs.
- Document your accomplishments and contributions.
- Be Curious!



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Leadership Starts with You: Self-Care Matters

Leadership begins with your well-being. Whether it's setting boundaries, taking breaks, or finding joy in your day—this is not optional, it's essential.

- Set boundaries and protect your energy
- Use your time off—it's part of your job
- Ask for help and check in with mentors
- Celebrate progress, not perfection
- Your well-being is foundational to your impact



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Q & A





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Book Recommendation to boost your professional and personal growth

