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Coffee with Molly

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO WORK HARD

Wow.... That was even hard for me to type!

I was told growing up that the secret to long-term career success was to come early, stay late and work hard. The message was clear, the harder I worked, the more I would advance. Maybe true in one era, but not in 2026.

To be successful today, you have to do more than work hard. You have to understand strategy, leadership, executive presence and the concept of professional influence.

Big words with a big impact on you and your career!
Let's break them down:



Strategy: you must be able to strategize, analyze and make strategic decisions based on data and needs. This is a proactive practice that requires you to be a good critical thinker and problem solver.

Leadership: you need to exercise leadership in your job. Make recommendations, create potential scenarios to explore, be a positive decision maker, and practice accountability and positivity. You are the best ambassador for your department and your district!

Executive Presence: humble and kind is a great country western song, and they are positive human traits- but to be successful you must have confidence and passion as well. Look like the part, walk like a leader, prepare like a leader, and embrace being in a leadership position.

Professional Influence: you are no longer just a "worker bee". Recognizing that with your title comes the opportunity to lead your department, create policies and recommendations, and be the "voice of the yellow bus" in your district! You are the foremost authority on student transportation. Your history, education, certifications, and expertise give you a unique opportunity to be the subject matter expert!



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There is a popular cliché that says, “work smarter not harder.” That cliché should have been written for 2026! Today, it is all about utilizing your best skills, understanding and practicing your leadership and executive presence and being an up to date and respected professional!

Feeling overworked, overlooked and stagnant? Want to change the dynamic and move ahead? You can do it! Maybe you could benefit from a certification, professional development courses, leadership training or formal academic training? It's the perfect time to consider your options and set your trajectory!

