

INDUSTRY MESSAGE



Working Smart: Ritualizing NIA

Open any file from any time in our company's history and you will find a number that has been clouded—not highlighted, clouded—with an orange highlighter. This practice is one of my dad's work rituals, and one we still respect and repeat daily. One of the things I remember most about my father was his steadfast dedication to a number of rituals, both at work and in his personal life. Bringing order to the otherwise chaotic and unpredictable world of contracting was one of his gifts. He believed in checklists, in having a place for everything and keeping everything in its place, and in checking his calculations three times. I could fill this entire issue of *Insulation Outlook* with a discussion of my father's rituals.

Rituals become habits that can increase productivity and predictability. The most effective rituals are not random but have been deliberately developed over time with purpose and intention. Rituals are often small, simple acts we can control. In a business environment that is uncertain (particularly over the past three years), focusing on what we can control also can be a stress relief and mental health boost. The pandemic interrupted and interfered with many workplace rituals—interacting with coworkers in person, visiting job sites, and attending meetings—which made an already stressful situation even more unsettling.

In my opinion, an important aspect of moving past the chaos of the past few years is getting back to our workplace rituals, and NIA participation is at the top of my list. The National Insulation Association has been around since 1953, consistently working on behalf of the mechanical insulation industry. It is great to see many of the same faces every year at NIA events, and wonderful to meet those who are new to our industry. And when challenges arise, connections made through association interactions are often the colleagues I call for assistance and advice. For my business, making the most of my NIA membership has made all the difference post-Covid. The membership dues are a small amount to pay to have access to this community, where we are truly **Better Together**.

I obsessively create checklists and color-code my calendar. As a tennis player, I am most comfortable (and play better?) when I lean into small rituals on the court. In my work life, many of my father's rituals are still part of my day-to-day routine; and ritualizing association participation has become a go-to professional strategy. I urge you to make engaging with NIA a habit in your work lives: Regularly stop by NIA's website, attend association events as part of your business development and relationship-building efforts, check in often to see what is new in NIA's Education Center, and set aside time to peruse *Insulation Outlook* each month.

Let's be
Better Together.

Laura Dover
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