

# INDUSTRY MESSAGE



## The Power of Pointing Fingers

The ritual of finger pointing in basketball was devised by Dean Smith, the iconic basketball coach for the University of North Carolina, and it was quite innovative at the time. Smith taught his players to point to the player who passed the ball after a scored basket. For Smith, this credit-the-assist gesture was an acknowledgment that the points were not all about the player who scored but as much about the unselfish act—the pass—that made the basket possible. “When you make a basket, you point to the player who threw you the ball. That applies not just to basketball, but to everything we do. No one makes it through life without lots of assists,” Smith wrote in *The Carolina Way*.

Smith believed that pointing to the passer showed respect for an unselfish action that resulted in a score and elevated the team as a whole. (In fact, Smith is said to have made the entire team run sprints if a player forgot to point.) This ritual has become commonplace in sports and throughout popular culture. Indeed, the finger-point has become a universal symbol of thankfulness and comradery.

There is so much wisdom in this simple gesture. Accomplishments are never about one person, one job, or one company. Insulators work closely with many other trades, and insulation contractors could not function without distributors, fabricators, and manufacturers. We may be competitors, but we are all working together as part of a larger team. Insulators can point to project managers and warehouse personnel who bid, win, and facilitate projects; and office personnel can point to insulators, whose skill in the field represents the core value of what we do as an industry. Insulation professionals on the job and in the office, as well as in manufacturing facilities, fabrication shops, and distribution warehouses, are all important components of the mechanical insulation team. The scarcity of labor and corresponding rise in material costs makes teamwork and collaboration more important now than ever in the history of our industry.

As an industry, as an association, as leaders in our own companies, let’s all take a moment to point to the assist, to acknowledge someone who works unselfishly for the betterment of the industry. I point first to those within my own company who have assisted me and my family in innumerable ways over the years. Without an awful lot of assists, my small company could not have lasted nearly 60 years.

I point also to the NIA staff and Board of Directors. NIA is an organization whose sole purpose is supporting and elevating our industry—and I am thankful for all the assists.

Let’s be **Better Together**,

Laura Dover  
President  
National Insulation Association