

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ARE YOU AN AUTODIDACT?



BUD EARLEY

In this President's Message, I would like to give you an important tip—one that can help you get more educational information for both your professional and personal benefit. What is that tip, you ask? Become an autodidact! You're probably asking yourself, "How did he come up with that one?" Well, I was able to find this word because I am an autodidact.

Autodidacts spend a great deal of time reviewing the resources of libraries and educational websites and most any other available sources for information. One may become an autodidact at nearly any point in one's life. While some may have been educated in a conventional manner in a particular field, they may choose to inform themselves in other, often unrelated areas. Many autodidacts seek instruction and guidance from experts, colleagues, friends, teachers, parents, siblings, and the community. Are you an autodidact or self-teacher? If you are reading this message, chances are pretty good that you are, in fact, an autodidact.

Education, in its general sense, is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, research, or simply through autodidacticism (learning on your own or by yourself). Generally, it occurs through any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts. Promoting an awareness of concrete repair technology is an important mission that we at ICRI embrace. We're continually looking for ways to deliver relative and useful concrete repair information to our members and nonmembers alike while ensuring that you have the best (educational concrete repair) products and services possible. So, if you're an autodidact, where do you go to be educated on concrete repair materials and methods?

If you're like a lot of people in the concrete repair industry, you have already learned about ICRI. It's quite possible that you've added multiple ICRI technical guidelines to your personal library. Over the past few years, our technical committees have been hard at work introducing new guidelines and revising or updating our existing guidelines. I've gone back through almost 10 years of the *Concrete Repair Bulletin (CRB)* and found many references to "education" from our Past Presidents and the many authors who have contributed articles to *CRB*. Even the ICRI Mission Statement embraces education as a primary function of the organization. *The mission of the International Concrete Repair Institute is to be the leading resource for education and information to improve the quality of repair, restoration, and protection of concrete and other structures in accordance with consensus criteria.* Our mission is accomplished through the dedication

and work of our volunteer members. Our national committee structure is divided into administrative committees and technical committees. One of the most important products of ICRI is education. If you are an autodidact like me, you shouldn't have to go any further than our own organization for educational information on concrete repair materials and methods.

ICRI's Education Committee was established to provide educational programs to disseminate technical information on repair, restoration, and protection of concrete. Over the past few years, our Education Committee created the Guideline Training Program. This program focuses on four of our top-selling technical guidelines. The goal of the program is to teach the principles and fundamentals of these chosen guidelines. This program will now be broken down into individual training modules for each guideline. Going forward, work is scheduled to continue to develop training modules for additional guidelines. In addition to what the Education Committee produced, Jim McDonald, an ICRI Past President and Secretary of our Technical Activities Committee (TAC), also produced an Overview of Technical Guidelines program. Whereas the Guideline Training Program concentrated on only four guidelines, the Overview program provides a very detailed description of each technical guideline that ICRI offers. A subcommittee of our Marketing Committee recently completed a five-slide introduction to several of our key technical guidelines. They are actively working on this introduction for all of the remaining guidelines.

By way of this President's Message, I am urging all of our chapter leaders to explore the possibility of having someone present the Overview of Technical Guidelines program to your chapter sometime this year. I know chapters are always looking for new educational programs for their chapters and this is a good one. Any use of the aforementioned information will be beneficial not only to those attending your chapter meetings but can also help increase a chapter's attendance and grow sales of our technical guidelines. Most importantly, it will provide much sought-out information for all of the autodidacts out there in search of useful knowledge. At the very least, every chapter should acquire a copy of the guideline introductions and present one or two at each of your scheduled chapter meetings this year.

Worldwide, the summer months are a time when concrete repairs get into full swing. Many concrete repair specifications are beginning to reference the ICRI technical guidelines. Now is the time to make sure everyone knows how to get this valuable information. Keep in mind that many notable contributions to our industry have been made by autodidacts.

"When planning for a year, plant corn; when planning for a decade, plant trees; when planning for life, train and educate people."—Author Unknown

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