

-- Speaker 0 00:00:05 Welcome to the clear impact podcast

Speaker 1 00:00:07 Brought to you by PGT university.

Speaker 0 00:00:09 Thanks for joining us today. My name is Sherry Conner, and I am your host,

Speaker 1 00:00:19 Not just following up, it's following through to the end where, you know, I fulfilled what I needed to fulfill, and that's why you're able to have long-term relationships because they know that they can trust you. Yeah. Our episode today on the clear impact podcast is a great one. As we meet Liz Rodriguez, Liz is the south Florida sales director and she is an absolute gem, a true professional. We discuss a really helpful topic, selling techniques. You will hear the passion Liz has for her work, her team, her customers, and her family. Okay, so today we are speaking with Liz Rodriguez. Liz is one of our sales directors. Hi Liz. It's so good to have you here today. Thanks Sherry. Glad to be here. I'm so glad that you could squeeze over to the west coast and spend a little time with us today. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Speaker 1 00:01:06 I just met you a couple of times, but I don't know anything about you. So tell us a little bit about yourself. Yeah, so I'm originally from westerly, Rhode Island, the smallest state in the country. But when I do meet people from Rhode Island, I'm like, I'm so excited cause you never meet anybody else from, from such a small place and grew up there. I moved to Florida in 99, so I've been here for 22 years now. I wanted to move here because it was warm pretty much all year round. Um, I came from the cold, which was cold nine months out of the year. Um, my brother had come to college down here, university of Miami, just, you know, saw opportunities here. So I kind of just moved down here by myself and started college and working. I never left, but I'm married. I've been married for almost 13 years.

Speaker 1 00:01:50 My husband and I have twin daughters. They actually just turned four years old on Tuesday the fourth. So it's their golden birthday. They turn four on the fourth. That's awesome. And I also have two stepdaughters. Well, my twin daughters are, uh, Charlotte and Abigail and then my stepdaughters are JC and Alex, uh, when a 16 and the other one is almost, uh, 20. Oh, wow. So built-in babysitters. Yes. Sort of yes. Yes. Those are, that's a lot of estrogen. Yeah. That's fun though. Well, that keeps you busy when you're not working. I'm curious how you got started at PGT innovations. How did you land in the space of windows and doors? I started with PGT innovations actually started with our, uh, one of our brands CGI, uh, back in 2012 as an inside estimator. Um, that's kind of has been my background. Uh, I've been in windows and doors since 2003.

Speaker 1 00:02:43 I worked on the dealer side, spent five years doing that, moved into an estimating role as a commercial estimator. We're working for a commercial window manufacturer in Miami. Unfortunately they had closed and I was with them for three years. And then I landed at CGI. I've been with CGI this month on the 21st will be my nine year anniversary. Wow. Congratulations. Yeah. So, um, so yeah, that's, that's kinda how I've become into the PGT innovations family. Obviously when PGT acquired CGI in 2014, you know, we obviously we merged, uh, sales teams and here we are. That's awesome. Yeah. So what do you love most about your job? Our role, first of all, the company itself, I mean, coming from CGI and then now being part of PGT, which is, has always been like the big guys, right. I remember my first day, you know, and outside sales and I was putting on my red shirt and I was so proud.

Speaker 1 00:03:39 I mean, it actually wasn't until 2016 where the CGI and the PGT reps combined forces. And I remember getting dressed one morning and I, I, and I finally put this blue shirt on. I'm like, wow, I made it to PGT. Like it was such an honor to be able to work for, um, such a, such a great company. I love being in sales. I love my team. The people that I work with work for, they have, uh, I've had the opportunity to have some great mentors, some great leaders on my side, but it's really about the people. It's our customers. You know, we develop these relationships with our customers that, you know, can go pretty deep. Um, and you get to understand, you know, their business and their life. A lot of our customers, you know, are either a husba --

-- nd and wife tag team, or, you know, they have a large sales team there that you just build those connections with.

Speaker 1 00:04:30 So what I really love most about my job is really the people that I get to talk to every day, whether it's good stuff or not so good stuff at the end of the day, you know, we, we all know kind of where we stand with one another and that's something that's really important to me is to have those relationships. I heard once that people don't do business with business, they do business with people. And so it's all about the connection and the integrity. And you know, if you say that you're going to call someone tomorrow, then you call them tomorrow and you're, and you're good for what you say you're going to do. And that can be tricky when there are so many things outside of your control, because you don't want to over promise and under deliver, which is sadly what a lot of salespeople will do.

Speaker 1 00:05:17 You're right. I mean, people buy from people, right? And when you say you're going to do something, you got to do it. And that's, you know what myself and my teams were always talking about. It's not just following up, is following through to the end where, you know, I fulfilled what I needed to fulfill. And that's why you're able to have long-term relationships because they know that they can trust you and they can trust the people underneath you. Um, how many people do you oversee currently right now is eight. Okay. We still have another territory in the Southwest that we're looking to. Um, that's the beauty of growth. Yes. And there are so many more people moving here. I'm sure the demand is just going to keep going and going and going every day. Be sure to

Speaker 0 00:05:58 Tune in for upcoming episodes to help you understand the fenestration industry, what you need to know when buying windows and doors and other related topics, you can find out more about us@pgtuniversity.com. You can also find us on Facebook and LinkedIn. We want to share some

Speaker 1 00:06:17 Tips with our dealer audience around some selling techniques, especially when it comes to the higher end products. What would you say would be good for our dealers to keep in mind when they're talking to a client that has maybe a \$5 million or a \$10 million home that they're having built? I think it's about knowing your knowing your audience, knowing the products, right? We can't sell something that we don't know anything about. It's also knowing the competition. There's always going to be competition a lot of times, whether it's a high end product or not, price is always at the top of the list. And it really shouldn't be because the customer should want to hear from our dealers that this is why we're offering this product is because we offer the ease of operation, the durability, the warranty, the strength, the peace of mind, the security, the energy efficiency, all of those things need to be driven home to those customers and made comfortable that they are making a large purchase.

Speaker 1 00:07:16 But these are the things why, and when they have, you know, three or four other quotes from people saying, I'm, you know, I received a quote for this product, or I received a quote for this other type of product. And it's 15 to 20% less having that, having those reasons why the product is superior to what other people are offering, I think is, is really important, right? You want to convey the value. So it's not always about the price, it's about the value, right? And you have to sometimes go to their level of listen. I'm a consumer as well. And I understand prices, you know, I'm making improvements to my home as well. And price is not at the forefront because that old cliché saying you get what you pay for. It goes hand in hand. You have to understand what, what you're purchasing and you have to be a hundred percent secure with the decision that you make.

Speaker 1 00:08:03 Um, but it's, it's an investment. I know I have a friend who built a house recently in south Venice in a brand new neighborhood. They put in PGT products because they knew the reputation and they are very familiar with storms here in south Florida. They've lived in this area for 20 plus years. Sure. Their neighbors opted not to because it was a, it was an additional cost. So here they are putting up, you know, a modest home in this area, 350 to \$400,000. And the upgrade was only about 10,000, but now --

-- they have these ugly bolts around the outside of their windows. And now they have to go and mess around with putting up their shutters should a storm come, which they will because hello, we live in south Florida, there's going to be storms. And she was like, I don't understand why they didn't do the upgrade.

Speaker 1 00:08:47 I don't understand why they would skimp on something that is so simple, just for the aesthetics of not having those silly bolts around the outside of my windows. I don't want that look. And I know PGT products are amazing. So the CGI as well, and all of our brands, obviously those options, my house, uh, the builder put impact products in there. They're unfortunately not, not PGT or CGI. They're actually, uh, echo, you know, they've been great. And, you know, they've, we went through Irma, although we didn't have, you know, the big brunt of the damages that happened, but, uh, we did get tons of driving rain and wind. Uh, so, you know, we went through that fine. And during the summertime, you would think that we're having a mini hurricane just because of the storms and the mini tropical depressions that come through here and there, but they've held up.

Speaker 1 00:09:35 Great. So, you know, we moved into our house in 2016, but even prior to that, my husband and I lived in a condo for six, seven years. And it had impact as well. I, I will never live anywhere. It doesn't matter if I live in Kentucky, I will have impact windows just for the safety and security as well, aside from, you know, storms and whatnot. And the sound, just the sound difference is incredible as well. Yes, absolutely. And where do you live? Liz? I live down in the color bay area down in south Miami. I'm about, uh, let's say 35 minutes from key Largo pretty far down there. Nice. Do you get down to the keys often? I don't know. It's funny. My husband and I have have been living in Miami specifically since 2010. We've never been to the keys together. Well, I think you're overdue.

Speaker 1 00:10:21 We'll be heading down there in a couple months, but good. Yeah. Good. It's a, it's a lot of fun. It's a lot of fun you have to do at once. Yeah. Well, we are going to wrap up our conversation, but as part of our introduction series, because it's a clear impact podcast, we want to kind of know how a specific event or person has made an impact in your life. So can you tell us a little something from actually it's my role in outside sales? So I have always been kind of that behind the scenes kind of person. I like to make things happen, but I don't like to let people know that I'd made that happen. And in 2013, I had gone to my boss and said, Hey, I, you know, I'm thinking about going into outside sales, which was completely out of my comfort zone.

Speaker 1 00:11:08 Just not something that was ever for me. It had, when I was first hired at CGI, they asked me, Hey, would you ever go into outside sales? And I said, absolutely not. It's just not something that I wanted to do. And I'm like, okay, I can either sit in this in an office for the rest of my life, or I can do something different. And, you know, they had me interview. I had to do a product training class. Um, I mean, I really had to stretch the limits of my comfort zone. I never wanted to get up in front of people and give a presentation that just scared the death atomy. And I'm like, okay, I'm going to, I got this and I'm going to do it. And I did. And I went into that role in 2014, 2018. I wanted to, um, I became a regional sales manager, 2020, um, director of sales.

Speaker 1 00:11:57 It has given me a pathway to a career that I would have never imagined just by doing that out of your comfort zone thing. And, and that's something that I was telling my team too. I'm like, if you do something out of your comfort zone every day, that when you do do it, it doesn't feel as uncomfortable. Right. You know, and it's, it might be a little uncomfortable at first. It's so worth it. And I, and I'm truly, truly blessed. And I've had, like I mentioned earlier, I've had some great mentors that have helped me in the early stages of my career. And I also have great mentors right now who are with me on a daily basis that, uh, have truly helped me grow and continue to grow. So I'm very blessed about that. That's awesome. Everyone is cheering each other on. And, um, I really love that.

Speaker 1 00:12:47 I love that environment and it doesn't matter --

-- what department you're in or what team you're on. Everybody seems to really just want what's best for the company and for our customers. So I think it's a good spot to be in. Well, I'm sure we'll have you back another day to talk about something else. Um, you're on the front lines and you're hearing what the customers are needing and what our dealer audience is needing. And so I'm sure we can find another topic for us to chat about the next time you're on this side. Great. Thanks Sherry. Thanks Liz

Speaker 0 00:13:17 PGT. A university is the customer education team for an entire family of brands. We began with the original, easy breeze, ports and closure lie then became PGT. America's leading brand of impact resistant windows and doors. We then added CGI CGIC WinDoor, Western windows, new south windows and echo windows and doors. We create products built to withstand major storms, keeping people safe, secure, and prepared. Our exceptional brands give you the protection you need without compromising design or functionality. PGT university is here to educate you our listener so that you can be a more informed consumer of window and door products. <inaudible>.

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