



## Understanding the Challenges of Working with New Designers in the Window Treatments Industry

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The journey of a new designer in the window treatment industry is often fraught with learning curves and budget constraints. Recognizing that these designers require more time and patience is crucial. In this episode, Vita and I delved into the reality that design schools rarely cover window treatments, leaving graduates unprepared for this niche. This lack of education isn't their fault, and as industry professionals, we have a responsibility to guide them. Here are our tips:

#### 1. Don't Make Assumptions About Their Knowledge

Clear communication is king. Don't assume the designer knows everything, and walk them through the details. Having everything documented in those detailed orders is a lifesaver too. It avoids any "whoops, I didn't know about that 12-inch cornice return" moments down the line. Working with new designers might take a little extra time to explain things, but that investment upfront keeps the project running smoothly and avoids any hiccups later. In the end, clear communication is the magic ingredient for a happy designer, a happy window treatment pro, and a happy client!

#### 2. Provide Them with Education

For Vita, "Lunch and Learns" are the secret weapon for window treatment pros to level up the game for interior designers, especially newbies. These group sessions are a chance for the window treatment professional to share their knowledge on the nitty-gritty that can leave designers scratching their heads (think custom treatment complexities, lining options galore, and even pricing strategies). The goal is to give them a solid foundation. It's also always a good idea to join the Window Coverings Association of America and go to events like the International Window Coverings Expo.

#### 3. Not Everyone is Going to be the Right Client

Not all design projects are created equal, especially in the window treatment world. If a designer keeps coming to you for pre-made blinds or drapes when you specialize in custom magic. These designers might be missing out on the whole package - the



incredible quality, the expert craftsmanship, the entire value proposition of custom window treatments. Guess what? That's totally fine! It's okay to politely decline working with them. You focus on your ideal clients, and they'll find someone who can help them with their vision.

#### **4. Nurture Them from the Beginning**

Vita has a genius way to cultivate relationships with interior designers. She created a mastermind group for emerging designer CEOs. This exclusive crew meets quarterly to swap knowledge, share resources, and connect with each other. While Vita throws in some business advice, the real magic happens in building those connections. As these designers level up their businesses and target more high-end projects, guess who they naturally turn to for custom window treatments? You got it, Vita's company! This is a long-term game, not a get-rich-quick scheme. But by investing in these new designers from the start, Vita gains a deep understanding of their challenges and positions her company as the ultimate solution for all their custom window treatment needs. They get the support they need to grow, and Vita builds a loyal network of future clients.