



# Thinking about a career in home appraisal?

Hear the real scoop from some of the best in the business.

**So just what does a career in appraisal entail?**

One of the best ways to learn about what the career has to offer, as well as its challenges, is from experienced appraisers themselves.

**We asked successful appraisal industry professionals to share their insights about the career.** Check out their answers to our appraisal career questions below!



**QA**  
with Jim Glickman, MAI

An appraiser since 1977, Jim Glickman, MAI, is chief appraiser, Real Property Division, Office of the Assessor, County of Sacramento, in California. He is also co-author of "Basic Real Estate Appraisal," a textbook about the fundamentals of appraisal, and is an adjunct professor at American River College, where he teaches an introductory real estate appraisal class.

**Mbition:**  
What makes a good appraiser?

**Glickman:** First and foremost, the individual has to have integrity. You have to have the ability to deal with people, as well as numbers. You're dealing with clients; you're dealing with the public; you're dealing with other professionals. So, it's really good to be able to work with people and to communicate with them clearly, whether in person, over the phone, through email.

You also should be able to absorb a lot of information. You have to be able to sift through it and identify and glean from it the important information relevant to a property appraisal. It's having a good sense of what's relevant.

**Mbition:**  
What skills are important for an appraiser to have?

**Glickman:** It's important to have strong communication skills and the ability to write—to write clearly and succinctly. A lot of what we do is communicate our thoughts. And a lot of people want an executive summary format, so you have to be able to get to the point quickly and clearly.

Obviously they also have to have math skills and computer skills. Those are probably the top three things.

But another important attribute is to be able to sift through regulations and laws and have the ability to understand and apply them.

**Mbition:**  
What's your favorite part of the job?

**Glickman:** My favorite part of the job is having the ability to help people solve real estate-related problems. Helping somebody doesn't necessarily mean giving them the answer they want, but rather giving them a sound answer to their real estate question, whether it's value or some other issue.

**“I also like being able to choose the kind of work I do—being able to go out and look at properties and not be stuck behind a desk or in a cubicle. You're interacting with people.”**

It's not so much a job; it's really a profession. Appraisal is a profession. If you look at it as a job, you're not going to get that satisfaction.

**Mbition:**  
What's the most challenging part of the job?

**Glickman:** The best part is you're dealing with people; the worst part is you're dealing with people. It can be challenging to explain your reasoning. Basically, as an appraiser, you're defending your opinion. A lot of times there aren't all the facts and figures that line up to support what you're doing. It comes down to having good judgment and being able to impart to

others why you reached a certain conclusion. A lot of people are set in their opinions and may have a conflicting opinion. The challenge is trying to clearly communicate what you did.

At the end of the day, you're probably not going to agree on anything. Actually the interesting thing about appraisal is if nobody agrees with what you did, you're probably right.

**Mbition:**  
And what's most rewarding?

**Glickman:** Helping people to make better real estate-related decisions.

**Mbition:**  
Name one important trend you think will impact the industry and explain why.

**Glickman:** This month, there is a public meeting being held by the Appraiser Qualifications Board, which is part of the Appraisal Foundation. They're looking at proposed changes for the Real Property Appraiser Qualifications Criteria. They had instituted a requirement for a bachelor's degree, but are backing away from that requirement for licensed appraisers and are looking at a different set of criteria. Education will still be required, but it'll be a combination of specific course work, perhaps some college level examination preparation courses .... I think that, in combination with some other changes to the criteria for the licensing of certified apprais-

ers, that's probably the biggest thing that's going to impact the industry and at least remove some barriers to entry.

**Mbition:**

**Does that mean they're loosening entry criteria into the profession?**

**Glickman:** It's not lowering the bar, but it's recognizing that there are a lot of good people with different types of backgrounds that will be assets to the industry. And by saying you have to have a bachelor's degree to gain entry into the profession, we're missing a lot of good people that may be coming through the community college system or the college of hard knocks. But they have all the right skills.

**Mbition:**

**What changes have you seen in the appraisal industry over the past five to 10 years?**

**Glickman:** Particularly with residential appraising, we've seen the introduction of appraisal management companies. In the past, we used to deal directly with the lenders, the clients. Now, basically, appraisers are taking orders through emails and website portals, and the personal nature and personal relationships that you used to have with your clients have diminished greatly. There are appraisers doing certain types of work that still have that personal connection, but, particularly for residential appraisers that do lender work, it has changed a lot. It tends to be more driven by the needs of the lenders, with short turnaround times on work and fees that have stayed low. If you look at inflation rates for any product or service in the market, you'll probably find that appraisal fees have suffered the most and have not kept up with inflation, yet more and more is required of appraisers.

**Mbition:**

**What is your best advice for someone considering a career in appraisal?**

**Glickman:** Educate yourself, whether you're taking classes in real estate appraisal or brokerage, networking or reading blogs like this one. Try to stay connected to the industry so you know the ins and outs and challenges. There are a lot of students who think they can take a class and become an appraiser. When you start explaining all the requirements for education and experience, what you need to do to become an appraiser, they realize there's more to it.

## Thinking about a career in appraisal?

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