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Master's class in appraising through an organization

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Like professionals in many fields, appraisers who have been successfully practicing their craft for years believe they are among the best there is. I agree that experience brings a higher level of professional competency. Because so many appraisers work alone, it's also reasonable to ask by whose standards is competency being measured.

One way to ascertain how proficient you are is with the designation process. There's a difference in designations and the process to obtain one. For instance, a recently established national appraisal association awards the ability of adding a designation to a resume to anyone who pays dues. They do not evaluate the member's professional capabilities in any manner.

Professional appraisal organizations, on the other hand, employ a comprehensive process that evaluates the work of a candidate. MBREA, for example, has a multi-step process that involves a demonstration report, examination of workfiles and an interview of the candidate by the Designation Committee. The process becomes a "master's class" in appraising.

Members of the Designation Committee are experienced appraisers who have earned designations of their own. Many hold designations from two or more professional appraisal organizations, a process that taught them the most intricate aspects of the profession. They take their craft seriously and believe that obtaining a designation is an earned privilege.

An appraiser who chooses to obtain a designation exposes themselves to a level of professional critiquing and coaching that is priceless. The thoughtful analysis by the committee, shared in constructive manner, provides the candidate with high-level instruction about technique and report writing. One candidate summarized the experience as follows, "It is not often that an appraiser gets the opportunity to improve their work with the review committee's level of detail and attention."

The process to obtain a designation may seem daunting, but it is not. MBREA assigns each candidate a mentor to guide them through the development of the demonstration report. Other committee members review the report and provide written guidance on changes or additional information needed. During the interview, various committee members ask questions and offer suggestions for improving the workfiles being reviewed.

An appraiser has to be determined to finish and open-minded about criticism of their work to successfully navigate the designation channel. The belief that your work must be good because your clients accept it may be quickly disproved and if you let the feedback discourage you, then you will fail to reap the benefit of accomplishing a major professional milestone.

Why should you choose to pursue the designation path? The answer is simple; if you are committed to appraising as a professional pursuit, should you not equip yourself with the highest level of knowledge, training and recognition available? That's what you receive by becoming a designated appraiser through a recognized professional appraisal organization.

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