

4 Steps to a Faster Appraisal

If you worked with appraisers ten years ago, you know how much technology has changed since then. What you might not realize is that there have been many developments in technology and e-commerce that have improved turnaround times on appraisal assignments. We're taking advantage of them. Are you taking advantage of every opportunity you have to speed up the process? Here are some suggestions.

1. **Are you ordering appraisals online?** With online ordering, you get automatic e-mail acknowledgements that the assignment was received. It's the single biggest time saver available to both of us! You don't have to wonder whether we received the order.
2. **Are you providing complete and accurate information about the subject property?** There's nothing like being one number off on the street address to add unnecessary time to an appraisal assignment. And if you have a tax parcel number, plat map number, subdivision name or anything else that uniquely identifies the property, please pass it along. We even welcome lists of recent sales in the area — though be advised that professional appraisers must *always* do their own due diligence on comparable sales, and ours might differ from yours.
3. **Are you letting us know up front any details about the property that might make it unique?** Cookie-cutter homes are relatively easy to appraise. What takes time is analyzing how unique features contribute to or detract from what otherwise would be a property's market value. Let us know up front when you order your report if there are unique features of the home or surrounding area — for example, it's had a recent addition put on, it's subject to zoning restrictions, it's prone to flooding. These are things we'll find out on our own anyway, and knowing them as soon as possible makes your report arrive more quickly.
4. **Are you making the occupants of the home aware of what to expect?** One of the most time consuming parts of the appraisal process is setting an appointment with the occupants of the home. Some homeowners are understandably uncomfortable with the fact a stranger wants to come in their house and look around and make notes. Some think they have to make the place spotless before the appraiser comes by, thinking that will make the house appraise higher. So they put off the appointment until they can get around to cleaning.

Hearing from you (the loan officer) about the appraisal process, who we are, and especially that dusting and polishing won't make it more likely their sale will close, can go a long way toward trimming the time it takes to inspect a home. Please feel free to point them to this website, where we have many pages of information about the appraisal process. Encourage them to call us if they want to familiarize themselves with our staff and services.