

I'm a Gemologist, Now What!?!?!

Start Building Your Own Personal Reputation Early and Start a following

First off, You all need to know and understand that the American Free Market System goes through Cyclic Cycles the Ebb and Flow, Rise and Fall of the Economy at the Local, City, County, State and Federal Level due to Geopolitical Factors at all levels from Local to world-wide and YOU ARE POWERLESS to stop those cycles from happening.

Therefore You have to be able to weather the Storms while preparing for the Good times once the Bad Times have come to an end.

Therefore YOU HAVE to become so damn good that you will become Un-fireable.

You need to make yourself so damn useful and knowledgeable and so Multi-faceted and so cross-trained that you will be the very last to be laid off or fired if and when the economy has a down turn.

In My Thirty-Five Plus (35+) years working at the Retail Level I have seen and rode out Five (5) Economic Events, from Local to World-wide that was totally out of my control.

In that 35-years I have only been unemployed twice, only Two (2) Times, once for 6-weeks and once for six (6) months and I only took unemployment benefits for 6-weeks total in all of my 35+ years!!

You better prepare yourself to do the same.

Become Totally and Completely Cross-Trained at all costs!!!

All too often I see Freshly Minted Gemologists, Graduate Gemologists, Certified Gemologists and F.G.A.'s who instantly want to become a Gem & Jewelry Appraiser before the ink is even dry on their diplomas.

There are a ton of other things you first should think about doing and mastering before you even attempt at becoming an Appraiser of Gems and Jewelry.

I'm not trying to dissuade you from becoming a Gem & Jewelry Appraiser, instead I think you would make a better jewelry appraiser once you have mastered a few other things.

I'm also setting YOU up so you can make Yourself Almost indispensable and therefore make you a talented Hot Commodity so you will almost never be unemployed and better yet underpaid and overlooked by your employers and the people you will be working with on a daily basis..

Now the reason why I'm doing this and listing these items and tasks you should master is that with each new skill set you should be rewarded with a raise in pay and therefore as you complete the list you become paid at a higher hourly rate.

Therefore making more money quicker than the others who only want to do the bare minimum and are thusly paid a bare minimum.

If you make more you can save more and believe me, you will need to save a lot if you want to become a TRUE Professional Appraiser of Gems and Jewelry.

However if you go from a gemologist to appraiser what happens if the economy goes to shit and you now don't have enough appraising jobs to keep you busy and making you money?

You starve!!! You quit and find another job but if it is the economy you will more than likely have to then quit the profession and go to an entirely new profession or vocation to become employable.

This is why it is so important to become fully and completely crossed trained within the retail jewelry business so that you will be the last to go and hopefully better times will come around before you have to make some very tough and painful decisions on what you will do next.

So lets get started on the List of Things to Do:

A. Product Knowledge is the KEY to Everything!!!

Know and learn every product and Service that is sold or is available in the store

1. Engagement and Wedding Designer Lines you carry in the store
2. Fashion Collection Lines you carry and promote
3. Men's Jewelry Lines you carry and promote
4. Designer Diamond Cut Lines you carry and promote
5. Custom In-House CAD/CAM and Hand-Carved Wax
6. In-House Repair Capabilities
7. Outside Services Your Store Offers

Damaged Diamond Re-Cutting and Polishing Services

Damaged Colored Stone Re-Cutting and Polishing Services

Watch Repair to a Watch Maker In-House or Service Center

Engraving In-House or through Outside Services

B. Learn How to Sell Jewelry, REALLY Sell Jewelry!!!!

Follow and Shadow the Top Four or Five Sales People in the store whenever you have free time and listen from a distance as to how they do their Sales

Presentations from selling a diamond, an Engagement Ring, Anniversary item, Birthday item, Colored Stone Jewelry, everything.

C. Learn the Tactics and Importance of Doing Add-On Sales.

D. Learn the POS (Point of Sales) Computer System

Become the In-House POS Guru and Go-To Person of the POS System

Learn every function and capabilities of the System inside and out

Be the person to talk to the System's Tech Support so you can become more knowledgeable about the system and build a repore with the Tech Support Staff so they know you by name and ask for you by name.

Learn how to do remote updates of the system

Import Vendor Product Inventory Bar Code Catalogs and Updated Pricing

Learn to do Inventory Control

Learn how to do printed Sales Reports, Charts and Graphs for upper management

The List is nearly endless as to what you can learn as to how the system works

BECOME the Leading Store Expert with the System!!!

E. Learn how to use every one of Your Vendor's Online Back-Door Inventory and pricing System so you can instantly see what they have for immediate sales and shipment and Learn how to place orders with them and do special orders for custom work you sell to your clients.

F. Learn How to Look up Your Diamond Dealer's Online Inventory List and Prices

G. Learn how to memo out Loose Diamonds and Colored Stones from your vendors

H. Learn how to become a Tough yet fair Negotiator with your vendors and suppliers.

Especially with Diamond Dealers and Colored Stone Dealers.

The Art of True Negotiators means you want to make everyone feel it is in their Best Interests

Simply tell your dealers you are working with smaller and smaller margins and kindly and politely remind them that the consumer is also looking up diamond deals from Blue Nile, Pricerscope, Whiteflash, Nice Ice and a ton of other online diamond retailers so their prices have to be comparable.

If you don't sell their diamond then both your vendor and you and your store will lose out on making a sale so you both lose.

Make it a win-win situation for both your dealer and you and your store.

Be Fair and Be Polite.

Don't DEMAND, ask

Learning the Art of Negotiating this way, it prepares you to then Negotiate a Fair and Higher Hourly Wage or Higher Commission Rate with your employer and upper management.

I'll write more on Negotiating Skills in an article all of its own, later on.

I. Learn to become an Insurance Replacement Specialist

This can become a very profitable Skill Set because a lot of people just don't get it or understand it and make it far more complicated than it really needs to be.

It is very specialized because you have to have a natural talent to work with complete strangers that are upset and you are trying to make them happy because of a Bad Incident of losing a piece of jewelry that may have had tremendous sentimental value and meaning to them.

This also gets you in on the Insurance Company's inside track working with Claim Adjusters and Agents.

Once again, Build a Good Solid Honest Reputation with them and start a following. This builds Your Following, of Consumers / Clients, Insurance Agents, Claim Adjusters and Insurance Companies as a whole.

You can quickly build YOUR Reputation Six (6) Different ways all at the same time.

- #1. The Insured, the one who lost the piece of jewelry
- #2. The Insurance Agent
- #3. The Insurance Adjuster
- #4. The Insurance Company
- #5. The Store Owner and Upper Management
- #6. Your Vendors, who supply the parts and pieces to replace the Jewelry

The Vast Majority of Insurance Claim Replacements should be completed in less than a week in most cases.

Quick Fast Service and Client Satisfaction is #1 with all Insurance Companies

J. Become the Store's Gemological Trainer

This can be another Job / Task that can be quite rewarding and proves to the sales staff and management that you do indeed know your stuff and that you are keeping yourself constantly and continually updated to new developments within the Diamond and Gemstone world.

You can even put on short 5 to 10-minute In-House Training sessions for the Sales Staff with hands-On demonstrations and you can also design and prepare and print out training educational hand-outs on thousands of topics and subjects.

Copyright your material so if you do leave one store for another store you can take all of your training material with you.

However you have to clear it with management first about you owning the copyright of your material. If you work on building the material during business hours and the store is paying you to do it then by all rights they will have rights to use your material even after you leave. If you do the work afterhours on your dime you own all the work and they will have to surrender all material to you when you leave and they can't use your material after you leave unless they pay you.

This also brings up another opportunity and that is to become a Training Trainer and Seminar Instructor for more than one store since you have all of this material you have put together.

Also it builds your confidence about public speaking by first getting you comfortable speaking to your salespeople and in small groups before you go out and talk to a large group.

Something to think about.

K. Sit with and Shadow the Bench Jewelers in your store

First ask them if it is OK for you to look over their shoulder so you can see them in action working on and repairing jewelry.

Ask them to teach you and show you the difference of cast, assembled, hand assembled, and hand fabricated items along with what CAD/CAM items look like

Learn the different types of settings, prong set, fishtail, channel, Fake Channel, Bead & bright-cut, Needle-point setting, Bezel, split bezel, Bar Set, Flush or Gypsy Set.

Know the difference between solder and fusing. What solder pits look like, what laser welding looks like.

Have them point out good setting jobs and poor setting jobs, good repairs from bad repairs, quality jewelry from poor quality mass produced lightweight jewelry.

L. Learn how to do Simple to Complex Spread Sheets and how to turn them into Graphic Charts.

M. Learn How to Do PowerPoint from Simple to Complex
Don't get pulled into doing Fancy Page flips that Swirl or are animated and stuff
Simple and straight forward is the Best Approach

N. Practice Your Loose Diamond Grading Skills DAILY!!!!

I CAN'T STRESS THIS ENOUGH!!!!

THIS IS AN INSTANT REPUTATION BUILDER!!!!

Start out Slow doing One Diamond in the morning and one in the afternoon

Your store should have several dozen GIA Graded Diamonds on hand and if not then use memo diamonds that your store has had shipped out to show clients that also have a GIA Diamond Grading Report sent with them.

Have someone in the store give you a Pre-Graded GIA Diamond in a blank diamond paper.

Time allotment for these Grading Skill Tests should be Ten (10) Minutes Maximum

On a Blank Scratch Paper you will need to write down and record the following information

- #1. Shape of the Diamond; Round, Oval, Marquise, and so on
- #2. Weight of the Diamond: (Use State Certified Diamond Scales)
(Always weigh the diamond Three (3) times and the same weight must come up at least twice, Two (2) Times.)
(ALWAYS GET INTO A HABIT OF DOING THIS!!!)
- #3. Measurements of the Diamond's Proportions;
Length, Width, Total Depth out to 1/100th of a Millimeter
Round Diamonds, Largest and Smallest Diameter and Total Depth:

*** Special Note***

Measuring Tolerances should be 4/100ths of a Millimeter or less

You can purchase Certified Calibration Measuring Block Sets to make sure your measuring instruments are within Tolerances.

- #4. Girdle Thickness: Smallest to Largest and Average
(None, Extremely Thin, Thin, Medium, Slightly Thick, and so on)
- #5. Girdle: (Frosted, Polished, Polished and Faceted)
- #6. Laser Inscription:
(Remember not all diamonds are Laser Inscribed on the girdle some may be laser inscribed on the Kite Facet or the Star Facet.)

- #7. Ultra Violet Reaction within a fully closed U.V. Viewing Box
Long Wave Reaction:
Short Wave Reaction:

(Always have a set of Test Stones in your U.V. Box that Vividly React under long Wave (Synthetic Boul Grown Corundum / Ruby Glow Bright Red under Long Wave and a Light Blue Synthetic Spinel as it Glows a Strong Intense Chalky Bluish/Greenish Color.)
(This way you know for a fact that both of your U.V. Lights are working properly.)

- #8. Color Grade the diamond against known GIA or AGS Color Master Diamond Set preferably a Seven (7) Stone or Nine (9) Stone Set and your diamond light should be shielded with a U.V. Filter to block all U.V. light while Color Grading.

Color Grade Assignment is One (1) Only Color Grade
(DO NOT Spilt or Spread the Color Grade it should be One (1) Color Grade Only.)
(Get into a Habit of only assigning One (1) Color Grade and ONLY One Color Grade.)

http://www.gemologyonline.com/LaShawn/Up-Grade_GIA_Diamond_Lite.pdf

- #9. Clarity Grade the Diamond under 10x Magnification using a Gemological Binocular Microscope preferably with Zoom Capability.

Clarity Grade Assignment is One (1) Only Clarity Grade

*** Special Note***

You should NEVER Have or be Confused about Clarity Grade Divisions

Grading a SI-1 Diamond as a VS-2 Grade
Grading a I-1 Diamond as a SI-2 Grade
Grading a VS-1 Diamond as a VVS-2 Grade

- #10. Cut Grade of the Diamond
(Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor)

For Round and Princess Cut diamond you can also use a Hearts and Arrow Viewer or an AGS/ASET Viewer to Help you quickly and accurately assign a Cut Grade to the Diamond you are grading.

http://www.kassoy.com/Assorted_Supplies/AngularSpectrumEvaluationToolASETHandheldDevice.asp

#11. All of this information written down on your paper in under Ten (10) Minutes Total

Now get the GIA Diamond Grading Report and see how many things you got right and how many things you got wrong. **LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES!!!**

You will learn and improve over time as Practice is the ONLY WAY you will Learn and Become Better and More Accurate.

Grading Two (2) Diamonds a Day for One (1) Month = 60 Diamonds Graded a Month.

The Second Month of this Ongoing Training and Learning Session is to now grade Two (2) Diamonds in the morning and Two (2) Diamonds in the Afternoon for a Total of Four (4) Diamonds a Day for One (1) Month = 120 Diamond Graded a month.

By now you should have improved greatly and you should be carrying a 95% Accuracy Rating on Cut Grade, Color Grade and Clarity Grade.

If you have not reached 95% Accuracy then continue doing Four (4) Diamonds a Day for another Month and see if you reached that Goal.

If you have then back down and only do One (1) Diamond a Day for a week, Five (5) Days and see if you still carry a 95% Average, that means you have to be on the mark on ALL Five Diamonds.

Continue the One (1) or Two (2) Diamonds a day for the Rest of Your Career.

NEVER STOP TESTING YOURSELF!!!! NEVER STOP LEARNING!!!!

You should now be able to do all of that, in Under Six (6) Minutes, per diamond

If you are Real Good, in Under Five (5) Minutes and still keep a 95% Accuracy, per diamond.

O. Start Grading Loose Diamonds for Local Pawn Shops and Other jewelry stores

Offer your specialized Professional Services to them as a Pre-Grading to sending those diamonds off to GIA to be graded and cert'ed.

Your Experience and Expertise and Accuracy will Instantly get you recognized by others as being an Honest, Ethical and Professional Diamond Grader and it will Instantly build onto your already expanding and Growing Reputation in the area.

Offer Your Services for ½ of what GIA Charges.

You can also offer them a 100% Money Back Guarantee if you are off more than One (1) Grade in Color or Clarity.

Who knows You might even be offered a Better Job and Better pay by one of those stores.

That has happened to me quit a few times.

Remember it is Your Long Standing Reputation that will bring you money in Higher wages and Recognition as an Honest and Ethical Professional in your area.

Without a Good Honest, Ethical, Professional Reputation YOU are nothing.

Special Note

If you personally own your own Equipment;, Microscope, Color Master Set, Diamond Light, U.V. Light and Box and Measuring Instruments and Hearts & Arrows Scope you can do this After-Hours or Do it One Day a Month on one of your days off.

You should be able to Accurately Grade Six (6) to Ten (10) Diamonds an hour.

THAT IS SOME SERIOUS CASH PER HOUR!!!!

Special Security Note

Always have One (1) of their employees with you at all times and they sign-off on each diamond you grade after you get done with it.

You always have to look-out for yourself, because no one else will.

If they do leave you alone then you have to make sure they sign-off on each Diamond You graded before you leave their store and have it in writing.

THIS IS A MUST!!!!

- P. Old Gold and Diamond Buyer (Off-the-Street)
- Q. Salvage / Scrap Buyer (Bidder) from the Insurance Companies Salvage Auctions
- R. Damage / Broken Diamond Re-Cut Specialist (Store In-House)
- S. Become a State Certified Personal Property Insurance Agent
- T. Traveling Trainer to Train and Educate Sales Associates in other stores in Your Area

As I state in #J. Become the Store's Gemological Trainer, you can take Your Copyrighted Dog and Pony Show on the Road and train others in your area.
Thirty (30) Minute Training Session Once Every Two (2) Months
- U. Become a Specialist in Your Field and Give Lectures and Seminars to Various Groups and Organizations such as GIA Alumni Meetings in Your Immediate area or within decent driving distances.
- V. Become a Blogger and Social Media Expert
- W. Write a weekly Newspaper Colum or Get Recognized by your local news print or radio or T.V. Stations as the Local Area Expert.
- X. Get Recognized by Talk Radio Nation-Wide as a Call-In Talk Show Expert
- Y. Become a V.I.P. Personal Shopper for Ultra High End Clients

The Sky is the Limit. You can do as little or as much as You Want.

The REAL Question is How Far Do You Want to Go and What Do YOU Want to Achieve?

Try to Learn and Master 60% to 80% of these things that I have listed

You will thank me years later that you did this first instead of learning it later on.

Just from this small simple list you will have at least Three (3) to Five (5) years' worth of work ahead of you before you should even think about becoming and studying to become an Appraiser of Gems and Jewelry.

But it is far from doing all of this in vain, in fact you are building a foundation that will serve you well once you decide to become an appraiser because by then you will have a more in-depth knowledge and understanding about Products, Goods and Services and also cost and mark-ups necessary to keep a jewelry store open and competitive in the open Free-Market System.

You will also build a long list of contacts and also be building a solid reputation not only in the store you work at and by your fellow workmates and management but also with dealers and vendors and more importantly your Clients

So if by the off chance you do leave one store and go to another you have this knowledge and information and skill sets to make the new store you work at become more profitable and competitive in their area and that in turns means more money in your pocket as well because you will be able to leverage and market and negotiate a better higher wage since you know so much more than just a simple salesperson or a simple gemologist.

Sneak Peek to what's Coming

- A – Resource Page for Appraisers
- B – How many Professional Jewelry Appraisers are there?
- C – I'm a Gemologist, now what!?!?!?
- D – So YOU want to become a Jewelry Appraiser?
- E – How Much Do You Charge for an Appraisal?
- F – TIME, How Much Time do YOU Really have to make a Living Appraising Jewelry
- G – The Future of The Jewelry Appraising Industry
- H – Why YOU Should Hire a Professional Appraiser with REAL Credentials
- I – A Spreadsheet IS YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND
- J – Complete History of Your Professional Education
- K – Complete History of Your Business Employment and Experience
- L – Complete Current Listing of Your Gemological Laboratory Equipment
- M – The Dreaded Appraisal Phone Call Question, "How Much does an Appraisal Cost?"
- N – Advertising Your Professional Appraising Titles to EVERYONE
- O – The Business Card – The BEST & Cheapest way to Advertise Yourself and Your Business
- P – Setting Up Your Web Browser so it is More Functional and More Importantly Productive
- Q – A 101 Uses for Your Cell Phone in Your Lab
- R – The EGL International Diamond Grading Controversy and How it effects Jewelry Appraisers
- S – The EGL International Diamond Grading Controversy and How it effects Jewelry Stores
- T – The Take-In Disclosure and Agreement Sheet
- U – Job Interviewing Topics and Subjects to Bring Up
- V – Negotiating Skills, Topics and Subjects to Bring Up
- W – The Advantages of Working with a Retail Jeweler
- X – Designer Jewelry Their Prices and Mark-ups
- Z1 – Specialty Cut Designer Cut Diamonds
- Z2 – Grading Scales – Quality of Cut Grade – Major & Melee Colored Stones
- Z3 – Grading Scales – Quality of Cut Grade – Major & Melee Diamonds
- Z4 – Grading Scales – Quality of Enameling – Over-All
- Z5 – Grading Scales – Condition of Enameling – Over-All