

One in a Billion: Glennis Beacham at the Pinnacle of Residential Real Estate

Imagine a club with only 18 members and more than 70,000 hopefuls clamoring to get in. The rule for admission is straightforward: Sell upward of \$1 billion in residential real estate. No surprise, it's a tough feat. And as you can imagine, the rest of us can learn a thing or two from those exceptional 18.

Glennis Beacham, founder of Buckhead-based Beacham & Company, Realtors, was recently inducted into The Billionaires' Club of *Who's Who in Luxury Real Estate*, an international association of the world's top luxury real estate firms. Members of this exclusive club have sold more than \$1 billion in residential real estate in their careers. Glennis is the club's first member from Georgia, and only the second from the American Southeast.

How did she achieve this? Through a well-honed combination of solid work habits, deep industry knowledge, a profound commitment to her clients and, most important, the good values she learned as a girl. Glennis was the middle of five children born within seven years to a physician father and nurse mother. "There was no foolishness in my house," she says. "When we were told to do something, we did it." At the time, she didn't know that trait would be her hallmark as a sales professional.

They called her 'Big Deal'

By age 11, Glennis was accompanying her father on hospital rounds at 4:00 am, carrying his charts and waiting outside rooms where she recalls her father delivering "news that people did not want to hear." People respected him for his bedside manner, she says. "What we are doing today is not life or death, but it is critical to the clients' financial well-being. For most people, buying or selling a home is the largest financial decision of their lives."

Glennis's nickname growing up was "Big Deal." Her father said she was always "wheeling and dealing." He thought she'd be a great attorney because she was constantly asking questions. But instead of law, Glennis studied business – and she's lived up to her childhood nickname.

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But wheeling and dealing alone won't get you into The Billionaires' Club. That's where values and discipline come in – such as doing what you say you'll do. “Be honest and trustworthy,” says Glennis. “Treat people with respect. Maintain confidentiality. Return calls,” she adds, noting that she rarely goes to bed without following up on that day's emails and phone calls. “My mother would address problems immediately – and I am exactly like that,” says Glennis, who, in conversation, exudes a quiet magnetism.

Another key to selling luxury real estate Glennis learned from her doctor father: discretion. “I never talk about my clients and they will never see their names in print,” says Glennis. “This business is not about me. It's about my clients. I am a facilitator. I am a counselor.” Indeed, much of her work these days involves sensitive conversations with clients who purchased homes from 2003 through 2006 and are now underwater. This is where trust is critical. “If someone trusts you,” she says, “then they will work with you for years.”

Building trust with a client, she says, begins at the first meeting. “You only have a chance to debut one time. The first impression lasts.” From there, Glennis and her agents nurture the bond with clients through reliability and integrity at every step. Along the way, they maintain client relationships through birthday phone calls, quarterly newsletters, monthly market updates, social functions and a “very large Christmas party where I invite people into my home.”

Glennis lets her clients know that they are her priority. “Never let people think that you are too busy for them,” she advises. “Even when you *are* busy, ask, ‘When is a convenient time for *you*?’” If their suggested time doesn't work, she says, you can offer an alternative, but only after you've asked, which shows that their needs came first.

Honing her skills

After graduating from Auburn University, Glennis worked as a manufacturers sales rep. “I really honed my skills,” she says. “I learned to ask open-ended questions and then not interrupt. If you interrupt, you make the person feel that you are more important than them.” But if you ask a good question, “and shut your mouth and listen,” she says, people will tell you how to sell to them.

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Transitioning to real estate, Glennis quickly grasped how to apply her “sales personality” and her life lessons to a new market. For 13 years she was the top agent at Atlanta’s oldest and largest real estate firm, Harry Norman, Realtors.

In 2006, Glennis founded Beacham & Company, Realtors, a firm specializing in Atlanta luxury real estate. The company is the product of her unique insight into the local real estate market and the recognition that buyers and sellers of luxury homes need the exacting, one-on-one service that only a smaller, boutique firm can provide. Beacham & Company has the highest average sales prices in the Atlanta metro area, and Glennis is believed to have sold more \$1 million homes than anyone else in Atlanta history.

Aside from integrity, reliability and highly personalized customer service, what else does it take to get into the Billionaires’ Club? Glennis is quick to cite a few more habits she learned as a girl. The first almost goes without saying: hard work, and lots of it. Glennis recalls working almost every weekend and many evenings when she started out. Second, she says, is treating everyone with equal respect. Spend a little time with her and you’ll soon see she’s genuinely appreciative of others, regardless of whether they’re clients or cleaning staff. “I care deeply about people,” she says. And it shows. Lastly, Glennis follows the Golden Rule of doing unto others, especially other real estate agents. “My most important client is the other agent,” she says, noting that her success has been linked to how other agents perceive and work with her. “I like to see other agents do well,” she notes, “especially in today’s market.”

A force of nature, Glennis Beacham is more river than hurricane: Steady. Persistent. Strong. “Relationships are like a marriage,” she says. “Till death do us part.” And make no mistake about it: That’s the kind of commitment that separates 18 Billionaires’ Club members from all the rest.

Symmetrics Group is a management consulting firm with a deep knowledge and passion for marketing and sales effectiveness. This top performer profile is the second in a series that will highlight best-in-class marketing and sales performance.