Loose Change®

a penny saved is a penny earned

July/August 2019 Vol. 26 No. 4

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Look at the Big Picture

You see a doctor for a health checkup and a mechanic to keep your vehicle in top shape. Likewise, it is important to work with a financial professional to conduct an annual review of your investment strategy, making sure it evolves as your life changes.

Look Inward

Before you review your investments, examine where you are in your life. Births and deaths, new jobs and lost jobs, marriage and divorce and injury and illness can all change your investment strategy.

Then, review your financial goals. Have they changed? For example, you might want to retire earlier than planned, which may mean you need to put away more money or change your investment strategy. Or you could have encountered health problems, which may have temporarily slowed how much you invest.

Look Outward

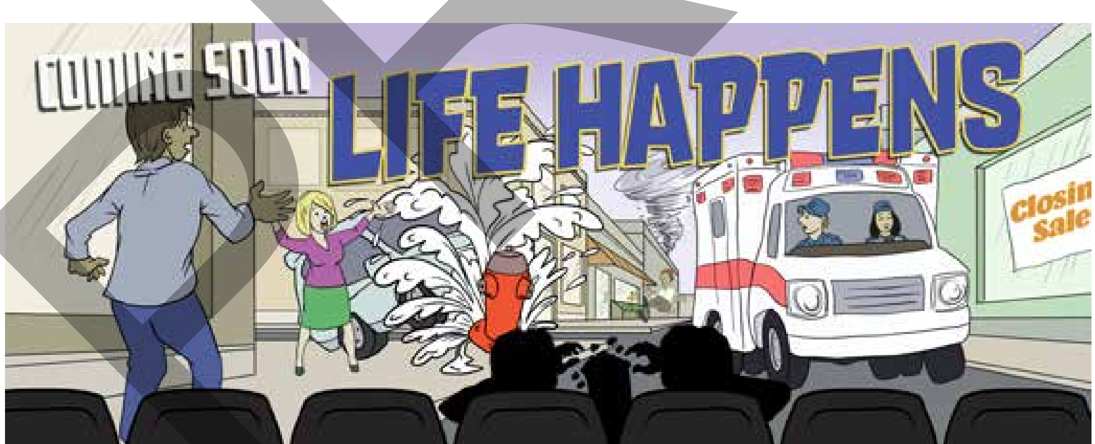
Next, look at the big picture. Are you invested appropriately, given your risk tolerance and time horizon? Economic and market conditions can alter even the most thorough investment strategies. Should you invest more in an existing retirement account, or consider supplemental investment vehicles like an IRA or Health Savings Account? Will you soon experience a life change that will alter your investment strategy?

Finally, review your portfolio. Is it still addressing concerns you may have had about inflation and interest rates? Have your investments shown any style drift or do they still follow the same strategies? How have your investments performed in relationship to their benchmarks? How much have taxes affected your portfolio's returns? How much do you pay in fees?

Get Answers

By knowing which questions to ask, you can work with your financial professional to make the necessary adjustments. If you know you own an investment that has drifted from its original strategy, look for a replacement that better meets your challenges. If you see a big increase in an investment's fees, you might compare them to those of a similar investment.

Or you may want to explore options to increase your potential net income once you reach your goals, such as a Roth IRA. Put these and other concerns in writing so you are prepared to ask the questions that are essential in any investment review.



When Good Luck is Taxed

You just won money in bingo, a state lottery or a casino and the first thing you're thinking about is how your windfall will be taxed. Ok, maybe that's not the first thing, but you should know how your winnings are taxed because underpaying your taxes could cost you.

A Taxing Situation

When you have gambling winnings, the government becomes a financial partner of sorts. You may receive a Form W-2G if your winnings exceed a certain figure, but you'll need to report the smallest amounts, even from a church raffle.

If you itemize on your tax return, you may deduct gambling losses up to the amount of your winnings. You also should keep a record of winnings and losses, including dates, names and locations of where you won or lost, in case you need to back up your tax return numbers. Professional gamblers have different rules.

Be smart with your winnings. Work with reputable financial and tax advisors to be sure your money is handled properly. Even small winnings can help pay off debt or build an emergency fund. Larger winnings could help secure your financial future.

Leaving the Nest

When young adults leave the nest, they will confront a number of financial challenges for the first time in their lives, but there are some things they can do to help ensure a successful experience.

Good Debt Management

Credit cards are not free money, and balances often come with high interest rates. Have a plan for when you will use the credit card. For example, a card is great for an emergency, but not for eating out or spring break trips. Financially savvy students live within their means. Paying any balance in full each month will keep the interest charges at bay and help build a good credit rating.

Get Insurance

If you are living in a dorm or apartment, be sure to carry renters' insurance, which will protect your belongings against theft, fire and other perils. You'll also need health insurance and auto insurance, if you have a car.

Minimize College Debt

You may not be able to avoid student loans completely but do everything you can to find alternative funding. Submit your FAFSA as soon as possible, apply for scholarships and grants, work part-time, become a student aid or residential assistant. Get an internship that pays. If you do have to resort to a student loan, apply for federal loans, which offer the ability to defer if you lose your job, go back to school as well as some income-based repayment plans that private loans do not provide.

Becoming a responsible adult at a young age will help you to build a secure financial future.

Reasons to Consider Owning Life Insurance in Retirement

If you are retired and your children are on their own, you may believe that you no longer need much life insurance* anymore. Then again, your life insurance benefits could continue to help you and your loved ones for years to come. Let's count the ways:

1. Provide Supplemental Income

If you've owned a whole life insurance policy for years, most likely it has built-up cash value, which you can tap as an extra source of income or use to continue paying premiums.

2. Pay Off the Mortgage

The life insurance death benefit might be enough to allow a loved one to live in your home mortgage-free after you're gone.

3. Replace Your Income

It's not uncommon to see older Americans returning to the workplace because they need the money or enjoy having the extra cash. Your life insurance death benefit can help replace this extra source of income for your survivors.

4. Leave a Legacy

You can be cash-poor and still leave a financial legacy to loved ones or a favorite charity via a life insurance benefit.

5. Equalize Your Estate

If you own a business and you have a child who will take over, life insurance can help equalize your estate for those children not involved in the business.

6. Accelerate Death Benefits

Many policies have what is called an accelerated death benefit. Should you become terminally ill, you may be able to withdraw a portion of your death benefit in cash. Other rules and restrictions apply.

7. Help Pay for Long Term Care

Some life insurance policies include a rider at additional cost that allows you to withdraw a portion of the death benefit to pay for long term care costs.

8. Pay Final Expenses

Policy death benefits can be used to cover funeral and other final expenses.

**Applications for life insurance are subject to underwriting. No insurance coverage exists unless a policy is issued and the required premium is paid. The cash value depends upon the type of product, the face amount, the time in force and length and amount of premium payments. The withdrawals you make or any outstanding loans or loan interest you have will then simply be accounted for in the payout of your policy's death benefit.*

Help Recruit and Retain Top-notch Employees

The job market is competitive and qualified candidates are becoming harder to find. In this environment desired employee benefits may play a large role in a recruit's decision to choose you or a competitor.

As an employer, you may subsidize employee benefits or let employees pay for them through payroll deductions. There are two basic ways to structure your benefit spend: menu-based and dollar-based.

Benefits by Menu

When you offer a menu of benefits to everyone. This has been the traditional model of employee benefit offerings, but it may not work best for employers with a diverse workforce.

Benefits by the Dollar

When you set a dollar amount for the benefits you'll subsidize, then provide more flexible benefits for diverse employees. For example, a married 55-year-old employee may value long-term care insurance while a single Millennial may be better served with disability income insurance.

The Right Package

One size won't fit all, but you can find your fit with a little preparation.

List your benefits and their cost, but don't forget to include any tax advantages your business may get. Do a little research and learn what peer companies offer their employees. Then, survey your employees and ask which benefits they value from most to least.

Once you understand your employees' wants and needs, work with your insurance professional to put together a benefit package that works for you and your business.

Financial Challenges Many Women Face

Studies show, on average, women earn less, have smaller retirement account balances, and live longer than men. There is a temptation to talk about women's financial challenges rather than their solutions. But the reality is that a need is a need, regardless of gender, and women can better meet their financial needs when they understand their options.

Career Advancement

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 42% of women in the labor force held a Bachelor's degree or higher in 2016, up from 11% in 1970. Having a college degree is a prerequisite for many jobs today—and women are clearly taking up this challenge. They can build on this with continuing education to help them advance in their careers.

Education and training matter for two reasons. One, women may take time off to start and raise a family, putting their career progression on hold. Two, any person taking a career timeout may see an adverse effect on how much they save for future goals.

How do you meet these unique challenges? Continue to learn, either through formal or industry education, to increase your marketability. Online courses in both areas are now the norm rather than the exception, making it easier to continue your education while taking a career break. When returning to work, insist on equitable pay. While women are making gains, they still earn just under 82% of what men earn. In times of full employment, you have options if your current employer undervalues your contributions.

Financial Catch-up

The second part of meeting your unique financial challenges is to make up for lost time, financially speaking. The cold reality of money is that women may save less than men for long-term goals. You can overcome financial time-outs by planning for them both before and after the fact.

Take saving for retirement: The earlier you save, the more opportunity there is for time and compounding to potentially help your savings grow. If you know a career timeout is in your future, double up on your retirement contributions before your break, while finding ways to maintain a disciplined approach once resuming your career.

Get Help

If you aren't sure how to overcome these financial challenges, a financial professional may help you sort out your options. Understand your challenges, however unique they may be, and consider the steps you can take to conquer them. Take the emotion out of your decision-making and empower yourself to take the steps necessary for a more secure financial future.

Natural Disaster Insurance

Summer's here and damaging water and wind may soon follow. While you can't stop Mother Nature, you can take steps to limit the financial impact of a hurricane, tornado or flood.

Practical Steps

If you live in a rainy area, it is crucial to make sure gutters and storm drains are clear of debris. Keep valuables and important papers on high ground and raise furnaces and water heaters to help prevent water damage if you live in a flood-prone area. Storm shutters may help prevent some damage if a windstorm strikes. Identify a safe room or area should you have to shelter in place during a natural disaster.

Get Insured

Owning homeowners or renters insurance may help protect you financially from a variety of perils, but it won't cover flood damage. If you live in an area that may flood, look into the National Flood Insurance Program to make sure you are at least partially protected.

Your property insurance also won't cover earthquake damage. For that, you'll need specialized coverage. Your policy may include coverage for tornado or hurricane wind damage, but it may have a separate and higher deductible than the rest of your homeowners coverage. To learn whether you're covered or not, talk to an insurance professional.

Take Control of Your Finances

While women have made gains in the workforce and on the financial front, they still have a way to go for full equality on both fronts. Women can overcome these challenges by taking charge and considering these steps:

1. Put more money away to make up for career breaks and longer lives
2. Keep learning and negotiating as a way to reach pay equality
3. Stay connected to learn of career advancement and other opportunities
4. Get insured to protect financial responsibilities for your family
5. Review finances at least annually and adjust as life changes

Plan for Change

When you prepare for industry, regulatory and other changes that could affect your business, you increase the likelihood that your business will prosper over the long term. Similarly, you'll want to pay attention to changes in your business that could affect your personal financial or estate strategies. Here are some events that should trigger a review.

Changes in Personnel

The loss of a key person, especially a co-owner, could have a dramatic impact on the viability of your business and is a possibility you need to address in advance. If you haven't already, consider the potential need for a buy-sell agreement and look into securing life insurance on your business's key people.

Changes in Financial Status

Has your business grown to the point where you can consider establishing a retirement plan? A retirement plan can be an attractive employee benefit and could also benefit you personally. Moreover, employer contributions to a qualified retirement plan are tax deductible (within limits).

Changes in Business Structure

When you change how your business is structured—for example, electing or terminating its S-corporation status or forming a limited liability company—you should also review your estate strategy. You want to be certain that changes in your business's structure do not negate parts of your strategy.

Put Your Monthly Investing on Autopilot

Big swings in investment values may make headlines, but trying to predict market volatility isn't usually a recipe for success. In contrast, a slow and steady investing approach may be boring but it can help you use market fluctuations to your advantage as you invest for long-term financial goals. Dollar-cost averaging* can play a part in this approach.

Disciplined Investing

Dollar-cost averaging is as much about discipline as it is an investing technique. When you use dollar-cost averaging, you contribute the same amount of money to the same investments on a regular schedule. Hypothetically, you might contribute $100 twice a month to your retirement account, putting $50 into equity investments and $50 into fixed income. If each share were, say, $1, then you would buy 50 shares of one asset and 50 of the other.

Buying the same dollar amount of any investment doesn't, however, mean you are buying the same amount of each investment's shares each period. When stock prices rise, you get fewer shares for your $50. So if stock prices double to $2 per share, you would buy 25 shares. And if fixed income shares declined to 75 cents a share, your $50 would buy almost 67 shares. In other words, you buy more securities with declining prices and fewer whose price has increased.

Emotionless Investing

Why does this matter? If you were making investment decisions on a daily basis, it may be easy to be influenced by what is happening in the markets now, not in the future. As a result, some investors tend to make decisions after the fact, buying when prices are high and selling when they're low.

Dollar-cost averaging takes the emotion out of investing, providing a way to maintain a consistent investing approach regardless of short-term volatility, with an eye on long-term goals.

Investing regular amounts steadily over time (dollar-cost averaging) may lower your average per-share cost, but this investment method will not guarantee a profit or protect you from a loss in declining markets. Effectiveness requires continuous investment, regardless of fluctuating prices. You should consider your ability to continue buying through periods of low prices.

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority

ADVERTISING REGULATION DEPARTMENT REVIEW LETTER

March 11, 2019

Reference: **FR2019-0212-0079/E**

Org Id: 8408

1. 2019 Loose Change July-August
   Rule: FIN 2210

The communication submitted appears consistent with applicable standards.

Reviewed by,

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