

# the benefits of financial planning

Prepare for your goals



# Take Control of Your Financial Future

The pace and complexity of managing modern finances may leave some people unprepared to achieve a successful financial future. If you're feeling less than confident about your future, having a well-prepared financial plan will help put you in control.

To manage your income and expenses effectively throughout your lifetime, consider partnering with your financial advisor, who has the experience to help you create a plan that strategically addresses your unique goals and needs.





## Why People Say Yes to Financial Planning

Financial planning pulls all your finances together, organizing them and making management easy and effective. The more you understand and better manage your wealth, the more prepared you are to achieve your goals and dreams.

### Creating a financial plan will help you:

- See your finances from a holistic point of view, so you understand how your individual financial decisions impact your overall financial success.
- Create integrated strategies that take into account the interconnectedness of your financial activities.
- Identify your long-term financial goals and the steps needed to pursue those goals.
- Track your progress and make adjustments as you experience new life events or develop different perspectives.

## Overcoming Objections to Financial Planning

As you consider contacting your financial advisor to pursue financial planning, you may have thought about the following:

***“It’s too much work.”*** Your advisor is specially equipped with the tools and experience to help you build a customized plan with the least amount of work for you.

***“It’s too expensive.”*** The fees for working with your financial advisor to create and monitor your plan are likely to be small compared to the opportunity cost of not managing your money in an effective, long-term manner. Managing your money is much like managing a business, and financial planning is a small investment with the potential to help you achieve your goals.

***“It’s too late.”*** It’s never too late to start planning. Whether you’re just beginning the accumulation phase of your career or have already gathered a substantial nest egg, financial planning can be valuable. Pre-retirees and those in retirement may find themselves struggling to protect their wealth, and having a plan in place, especially during uncertain economic times, can be comforting and rewarding.

***“I can do it myself.”*** There are many online resources that will help you get started with financial planning. However, some use a one-size-fits-all approach that doesn’t customize its process for your unique needs. You aren’t able to test models against risks or make any changes based on your situation. Your professional financial advisor has received specialized training and has the tools to prepare an individualized plan that maps your financial future. In addition, a professional financial advisor can guide you through implementing your plan, provide advice on revisions, when necessary, and help you monitor your progress toward making your goals a reality.

# Your Financial Advisor, Your Partner in Planning

Creating an effective financial plan takes time, know-how, and experience. Even if you're using popular consumer financial tools, planning on your own can be overwhelming and frustrating. Consulting with a financial advisor not only reduces your workload, but also helps ensure that your plan is comprehensive and based on current trends and data.

## When you partner with a professional, you'll gain:

- Knowledge of options and alternatives tailored to your specific financial situation
- Connections to a network of professionals (accounting, legal, real estate, insurance, trusts) when additional expertise is needed
- Unbiased advice and support from an experienced professional committed to guiding you toward long-term financial well-being



## What Your Financial Plan Should Include

The key to creating a successful financial plan is ensuring that it covers your current and future financial needs. The best way to determine your particular needs is by spending time with your financial advisor considering your options, defining your goals, and evaluating your resources.

The following are some common areas to consider when planning your financial future:

### Monthly Budget

Addressing your monthly budget is an important first step in successfully managing your overall finances. Failing to have a clear picture of your regular recurring bills and expenses can dramatically reduce your ability to meet your financial objectives.

### Savings

Fundamental to building a secure, manageable future is saving for the unexpected as well as the expected. Saving is easier if you “pay yourself first” and build in automatic savings into your budget.

### Risk Management

Risk can take many forms: illness, accident, liability, and natural disasters, to name a few. Failing to manage risk properly can jeopardize your financial future. That’s why smart financial planning evaluates the various levels and types of insurance you carry to make sure they’re aligned with your overall goals and needs. In many cases, insurance can also be used effectively as an alternative revenue stream and a hedge against inflation and riskier types of investments.

Life insurance policies contain exclusions, limitations, reductions of benefits, and terms for keeping them in force. Your financial professional can provide you with costs and complete details.

### Education Funding

The costs of education for children and grandchildren can be staggering and are seemingly always on the rise. Education is often one of the largest

expenses you'll incur. Arm yourself with current information about the variety of proactive education savings vehicles that can help you plan your funding goals while manage exposure to big surprises or long-term debt.

## **Retirement Planning**

Social Security benefits, employer-sponsored plans, and personal retirement savings including investments, IRAs, and annuities typically combine to comprise the retirement income for most Americans. Deciding which retirement choices will serve you best can be daunting, but your financial professional can guide you to the options that will support and enhance your overall investment and tax strategies.

## **Estate Planning**

Your legacy is in your hands. Only through diligent monitoring can you be assured that your assets will be transferred effectively and according to your wishes to the people and charities you care about most. Establishing trusts, regularly reviewing your legal documents and beneficiary designations, and examining tax implications for survivors are vital to establishing a plan that provides you and your loved ones with greater confidence and security.

## **Getting Started**

Let your advisor know that you want the benefits of financial planning for you and your loved ones and schedule an appointment to begin the process.

The more information you provide your advisor the better. Even if you drop off a box filled with your essential financial records, that's often enough to allow your advisor to start creating your customized financial plan.

Once your plan has been created, you and your advisor will review it regularly to help you stay on track towards your goals. As life changes, so does your financial situation. Your financial advisor will strategize with you to help you address these changes and keep you on the path to financial success.

**Reach out to your financial advisor today.**

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