

Monthly Newsletter – April 2015

Note from Theo and Warren

Financial markets had a great start to the year, but March (down about 1.3% on the equity side and down 0.5% on the bond side) showed us again that we should expect volatility during the course of the year. We still hold the view that growth in asset classes and portfolios will be lower in the next few years and investors should not expect the same levels of growth we have enjoyed in the past five and 10 years.

Given the myriad price hikes expected in the next few months, from Eskom to the fuel price, coupled with expected hikes in interest rates, we caution you to look closely at budgets and make sure you don't over extend yourself in this environment.

With that in mind, Thayn Niemand, from our East London branch, compiled an article that will help you to check that you're on top of things where finances are concerned.

- Theo and Warren

Which of your ducks is not in a row? *By Thayn Niemand*

Although modern technology has significantly changed the way we live our lives, there's a lot you can't automate. Certain basic issues – those that have an impact on your and/or your loved ones' peace of mind – can only properly be addressed by your own intervention.

And if you want to have all of the important ducks in a row, you need to organise the following things properly:

Finances

Any good financial plan requires an emergency cash fund (equivalent to at least three times the family budget), a plan to pay off personal debt, and a committed savings plan to meet various goals and objectives within a specific timeline: a wedding, a new car, an overseas holiday.

Estate plan

An updated last will and testament that ensures that your specific last wishes are able to be carried out easily and efficiently in accordance with the latest legislation.

Risk cover

The death or disability (permanent or temporary) of a family member can cause untold financial hardship in addition to the usual emotional consequences. Discuss this with your financial adviser to

work out whether you need a monthly income or a cash lump sum, and ensure you are not over- or under-insured. Trauma and accident benefits are another option to discuss here.

Retirement

Whether your retirement is near or far away, an analysis and financial projections relating to your retirement can either exhilarate you, or provide you with some serious food for thought. It's always an advantage to know what your financial situation will be when you no longer work and your investments have to work to provide an income for you!

Documentation

There will be certain times in your life when certain original documents are required, and when you can't find them, it costs you in time, convenience and actual money. Make sure you know exactly where the following six documents are – hopefully filed in a safe place:

- Last will and testament
- Antenuptial/divorce settlement agreement
- Title deeds of properties you own
- Vehicle registration papers
- Suretyship and partnership agreements
- Identity documents and birth certificates

Galileo Capital's financial planners are well equipped with the necessary experience and technology to assist you in obtaining appropriate solutions to these concerns – we're just a phone call away.

10 top productivity tips

We all have the same amount of time in a week, but it's how you approach it that makes the difference. Streamlining your tasks and focusing on productivity will help you to get more done in less time. Here are some top tips from the experts.

1. Tackle your least desirable tasks first – get them out of the way so that they don't weigh on you while you're doing the more pleasant tasks.
2. Empower your employees – when they feel like they're all equally important parts of the team, company morale and productivity go up. Don't micro-manage – let them get on with the jobs you hired them to do.
3. Quit social media – it really is a time sink, and you don't need to know what your friend had for lunch.
4. Immediately tackle simple tasks as they come in – apply the five-minute rule and if it's going to take less time than that, get it done.
5. Find a remote workspace – getting out of the office for one day a week boosts creativity and prevents burnout. Make it a practice for your whole team.
6. Disconnect from technology during crunch time – when you really need to knuckle down and concentrate, shut down email, the internet, and turn your phone to airplane mode. And don't forget to shut your office door.
7. Take a break – it seems counter-intuitive, but taking time to rest, eat and drink something can

make you more productive, because your brain is refreshed.

8. Schedule your email time – you really don't have to reply to every email as it comes in. Take charge of your technology; don't let it be in charge of you.
9. Take a Sabbath – at least one day a week should be completely work-free. You owe it to yourself to have some downtime, some time to relax and recharge.
10. Prepare on Sunday nights – check your appointments for the week ahead, read through any notes, ensure everything is prepared so that you head into Monday in a calm frame of mind.

Tuscany for a song

Here's a holiday with a difference. You can now travel to a small town in the hills of Tuscany for a chance to sing and learn Italian at the same time by taking a new class.

The class, "Italiano Cantando," is open to students at all levels of Italian, and is geared to those who want to improve their Italian pronunciation and intonation, learn about Italian culture, or just have a good sing-song. And it doesn't matter if you've never spoken a word of Italian in your life.

Class instructor Laura Capitani, was born in Rome and has been living and working in Maastricht, Netherlands for 17 years where she is a professor of Italian at the University and at Società Dante Alighieri. She also conducts two choirs, and combines language classes, historical insights and singing into a language learning programme with a difference.