
FINANCIAL INSIGHTS CHECKLIST

"If you want to be successful, you must respect one rule – Never lie to yourself."

- Paulo Coelho

The *Financial Insights Checklist* serves two purposes. First, it will help you to identify and eliminate obstacles that could make it more difficult for you to achieve your goals. Second, it will function as a guide, to make sure nothing is overlooked when creating your financial plan.

The *Financial Insights Checklist* is divided into 6 categories each with 8 to 12 multiple choice questions and should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers, only an opportunity to gain clarity and an understanding of the things you can do today and, in the future, to grow and protect your wealth.

1. If you are a "Do-It-Yourself" investor, this checklist will provide you invaluable insight into the areas you should focus your efforts on and help you prioritize the goals you have.
2. If you are a "Pay-For-Advice" investor, this checklist will ensure the financial planner you hire will have the data, quantitative and qualitative, needed to create your financial plan.
3. If you are a "Product-With-Advice" investor, this checklist will help to ensure the advice you receive, and the products you purchase are in your best interest.

Read each question and select the answer that best describes your situation. There are no right or wrong answers, only an opportunity to gain clarity and an understanding of the things you can do today and, in the future, to grow and protect your wealth.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial Management is the cornerstone to achieving financial independence. It can determine the lifestyle you enjoy today and the lifestyle you will enjoy in retirement. Effectively managing your wealth will allow you to take control of your finances, so that you can achieve the goals you have.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) Do you track monthly income and expenses? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2) Which statement best describes your cash flow situation at the end of the month?
 - ☐ There is excess money each month
 - ☐ There is just enough to pay bills if nothing goes wrong
 - ☐ There is a need to juggle bills to make ends meet
- 3) Do you maintain a statement of assets and liabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) How many credit cards do you own? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ >5
- 5) Which statement best describes your use of credit cards:
 - ☐ They are a convenience and I pay them off each month
 - ☐ They are a source of short-term financing and are paid off in a few months
 - ☐ They are a source of cash and I constantly carry a balance on them
- 6) Which statement best describes how you finance major purchases?
 - ☐ I plan and save in advance
 - ☐ I use a line of credit that I have with our bank
 - ☐ I use consumer financing provided by the retailer
- 7) Do you budget for known expenses such as vacation and Christmas? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 8) Do you have an emergency fund? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 9) Do you have a mortgage? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A (Renter)
- 10) Do you have a line of credit? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 11) Other than listed above; do you currently have other debt obligations? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NEXT STEPS

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management involves the identification and assessment of your exposure to unexpected financial loss due to an unfortunate event that is out of your control. Your advisor can compare your exposure to risk with your current insurance coverage to determine if there are any gaps that may adversely affect your financial security.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) In the past 12 months, have you reviewed your insurance coverages? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially
- 2) How well do you understand your insurance? ☐ Limited ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very well
- 3) Do you feel your insurance coverage still meets your needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
- 4) Check the following life changes that have occurred since your last insurance review:
☐ Marital status ☐ Family addition ☐ Health change ☐ Smoking status
☐ Employment status ☐ New home ☐ Mortgage renewal ☐ Group insurance changes
- 5) Have you ever smoked? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 6) Do you have an existing or previous health issue? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 7) Do you own any of the following types of insurance?

Life insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Disability insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Critical Illness insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Long Term Care insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Employer Group insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Home/Renters insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Auto insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Renewable Travel insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Professional Liability insurance:	You: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- 8) Are there loans or collateral assignments against any of the insurance you own? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, are you making interest payments? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NEXT STEPS

INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Working with an investment advisor can help you manage your investments more effectively with advice and recommendations to help you establish a suitable Risk Profile, Asset Allocation, and Investment Policy Statement (IPS) that reflects your values.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

1) Which of the following type of investment accounts do you own?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax-Advantaged (TFSA, RESP, RDSP) | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxable (Non-registered) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax-Deferred (RRSP, RRIF, LIRA, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate / Other |

2) Do you have a documented Risk Profile? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

3) Do you have a formal Investment Policy Statement (IPS)? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

4) Does your employer offer stock options as part of your compensation package? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5) Which statement best describes your relationship with professional investment advice?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I manage all investment decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> I share investment decisions with an advisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I leave all investment decisions to an advisor | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have any investments. |

6) Which statement best describes your investment knowledge?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a very limited knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a basic understanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have an average understanding | <input type="checkbox"/> I have considerable knowledge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have extensive knowledge | |

7) How often do you review the return performance of your investments?

- ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually ☐ Never ☐ N/A

8) How often do you review the allocation of your investments?

- ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually ☐ Never ☐ N/A

9) On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you understand the taxation of your investments?

- Low ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 High

10) On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you understand the fees on your investments?

- Low ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 High

11) Have you ever borrowed to make an investment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12) Have you ever made an investment that lost money? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- If yes, how did it make you feel? ☐ No big deal ☐ Not good ☐ Very upset

NEXT STEPS

RETIREMENT PLANNING

Retirement Planning is the process of managing your assets with the goal of achieving financial independence, so that earning an income is optional rather than a necessity. Although impacted by all areas of financial planning, it is highly integrated with Financial Management and Investment Management due to the dependency on available cash flow and the growth of investment savings.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) Do you have a goal for the age you want to retire? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2) Do you have a goal for the after-tax income you want in retirement? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3) Have you considered the difference between "needs" and "wants"? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) Have you considered the effects of inflation on retirement income? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5) Do you plan to relocate in retirement? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Have not decided
- 6) Which statement best describes your travel plans in retirement?
 - ☐ A rocking chair on the porch
 - ☐ A 2-week vacation in the winter
 - ☐ Winters in a warm location
 - ☐ World traveler
- 7) To what age do you expect to be an active traveler? ☐ No travel ☐ 70 ☐ 80 ☐ As long as I can.
- 8) What do you estimate your life expectancy at? You: ☐ <85 ☐ >=85 | Partner: ☐ <85 ☐ >=85
- 9) Do you expect to carry a mortgage into retirement? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 10) Do you plan to down-size your house in retirement? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 11) Have you considered a reverse mortgage? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure what one is?
- 12) If you own a business, does the value factor into your retirement plans? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
- 13) Does your employer provide a pension or group RRSP? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
If yes, do you take full advantage of voluntary matching contributions? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

NEXT STEPS

TAX PLANNING

Tax Planning impacts all areas of your finances. Decisions involving the timing of income, the purchase and/or the sale of an asset, selection of investments and the way you save for retirement, all play a role in managing your current and future tax obligations.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) Do you know what your Marginal Tax Rate (MTR) is? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2) Do you know what your Average Tax Rate (ATR) is? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3) Do you know what your current RRSP contribution room is? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) Do you know what your current TFSA contribution room is? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5) Which statement best describes you when filing your income tax return?
☐ I will typically owe money
☐ I will typically break even
☐ I will typically receive a refund
- 6) If you received a tax refund, you would? ☐ Invest it ☐ Pay down debt ☐ Spend it
- 7) Do you split income with your partner or family members for tax purposes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 8) When choosing an investment, does the tax treatment factor into your decision? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 9) Do you have self-employment income? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, are your income tax instalments up to date? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 10) Do you own foreign property in excess of \$100,000? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 11) Do you currently owe money to the Canada Revenue Agency? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 12) Are you a U.S. citizen? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No

NEXT STEPS

[illegible]

PERSONAL ESTATE PLANNING

Estate Planning is a formal process whereby an individual arranges for the orderly disposal of their assets to eliminate uncertainties over administration and probate. Although impacted by all areas of financial planning, estate planning is highly integrated with tax planning as all capital property is deemed to be disposed of immediately prior to death, triggering any deferred taxes.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) Do you have an up-to-date Will? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, is your executor(s) aware of the extent of their responsibilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, does your executor(s) know where to locate your important documents? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2) Are you an executor in someone else's will? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3) Do you have a Power of Attorney? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) Do you have a Health Care Directive? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5) Do you have a disabled dependent? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 6) Have you been married or had a partner previously? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 7) Are you subject to any support obligations? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 8) Do you own recreational real estate? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 9) Do you own rental real estate? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 10) Do you own real estate located in the U.S.? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 11) Are you a U.S. citizen? You: ☐ Yes ☐ No | Partner: ☐ Yes ☐ No

NEXT STEPS

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

CORPORATE ESTATE PLANNING

As a business owner, you need to ensure your estate planning also provides for the orderly succession of your business. With proper planning you can reduce income taxes and provide liquidity to ensure the continued success of what you have created.

SELECT THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION.

- 1) Is your business a Canadian Controlled Private Corporation (CCPC)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2) How many different business entities do you own an interest in? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ >5
- 3) Aside from you, are there other shareholders in your business? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) In the event of death, do you know what will happen to your business? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5) Does your business have a Unanimous Shareholders' Agreement in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
- 6) Does your business have a Buy-Sell Agreement in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
 - If yes, is it funded in the event of death? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - If yes, is it funded in the event of a disability? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - If yes, is it funded in the event of a critical illness? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 7) Are there key employees that are essential to the future success of your business? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 8) Have you considered an Estate Freeze? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure how one works
- 9) Have you considered a Family Trust? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure how one works
- 10) What goal do you have for the succession of your business? ☐ Sell ☐ Wind-up ☐ Family legacy

NEXT STEPS

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.