

# The Value of Financial Planning

Wealth Planning

Financial planning is a crucial step in managing your financial future. Not only does it help you see your financial situation today, it also helps you think about those things you would like to do in the next five years, ten years, and throughout retirement. You spend your entire working life saving for retirement, and it is important to set goals for yourself in order to enjoy it. The Stifel Wealth Strategist Report® can help you determine if you're on track toward your goals and to plan for a comfortable retirement.

Stifel's Wealth Strategist Report® will take a look at your entire financial situation, including your asset allocation, investable assets, liabilities, future income streams and savings, insurance needs, current estate plan, and more. We will take everything into consideration and determine strategies and action plans. The Stifel Wealth Strategist Report will provide you the guidance and knowledge needed in order to make responsible financial decisions.

Although financial planning can seem daunting, it doesn't have to be. Some may think financial planning is not for them. Perhaps they think they do not have enough income or assets to be concerned with it; others may say they simply do not have time for it or do not know where to begin. We all have to start somewhere. Whether you're a beginner just out of college or you're 65 and planning to retire in the next five years, financial planning can benefit anyone at any age with any amount of wealth.

We have all heard the question, "What's your number?" referring to the amount in taxable and qualified savings one needs to live out their retirement. We also know life is full of changes, and one's goals may change as they move through life. It's imperative to break down your goals to fit your individual needs. While there is no single magic number, we can give you the tools to help get you on the right track to planning for your future.

There are many uncertainties that will occur throughout your financial plan. Inflation may be higher than you expect, medical expenses may be higher than anticipated, or perhaps you may need to purchase a new car or home in the next five years. This supports the need to break down your goals, and in doing so, you can determine what percent of each goal can be funded along the way.

A Stifel Wealth Strategist Report® will help you quantify and define specific goals you would like to achieve throughout your life or even after you have passed. In order to make long-term financial goal planning achievable, it is important to categorize these goals into your needs, wants, and wishes. Your needs may consist of the cost to cover your bills and put food on the table. Your wants could be those goals you would really like to fund but that aren't critical. Your wishes might include that once-in-a-lifetime vacation or the home remodel you have always dreamed about. Defining these important goals helps you know if you are on the right track to a comfortable retirement, or at the very least helps give you the tools and feedback needed to meet some, if not all, of your goals.

The most important steps in the process of creating a financial plan are designing a plan that is specific to your goals and objectives, assessing the results, and adjusting your plan as needed. Financial planning is not looked at as a one-time event, but rather an ongoing process. You should review and update your plan annually or as any life events and situations occur. Your financial plan should be a helpful guide that will help keep you on the path toward your retirement goals. Contact your Stifel Financial Advisor today to discuss your situation and get you on the right track for your financial future.

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## Financial Planning Process

- **Identify goals and objectives** – Create the foundation of your financial roadmap.
- **Gather information** – Complete a questionnaire/fact finder with everything to include in your financial plan.
- **Analyze information** – Analyze the information gathered to ensure it is as accurate as possible. The fewer assumptions that go into a financial plan, the better your overall experience will be.
- **Propose strategies** – Evaluate the results provided within your financial plan and see where you stand in relation to your goals and objectives. Where can you make adjustments within your plan? Do you have a balanced portfolio? Can you retire earlier/later? Spend more/less? Perhaps you have overfunded your retirement and can afford to increase your spending goals.
- **Take action** – Talk to your financial professional about making modifications as needed and come up with your action plan.
- **Review and revise** – Review and update your financial plan yearly or if any life events occur that could change the outcome of the plan. Set a date for yearly meetings to review and update your plan.

## Things to Address While Creating Your Financial Plan

- Are your assets properly allocated in line with your risk tolerance?
- Are you saving enough?
- Are you contributing enough to your qualified accounts?
- Are your goals measurable and realistic?
- Do you plan to fund future wedding or education costs for your children?
- Are you properly insured?
- Are you using all the benefits available to you through your employer?
- What will happen to your assets after you have passed away?

## Financial Planning May Help You ...

- Plan for retirement
- Get out of debt
- Stay on track
- Assess your current financial situation, including net worth, cash flow, investments, taxes, etc.
- Create short-term and long-term goals to pursue your overall financial needs
- Optimize your cash flow
- Increase your financial intelligence
- Track your progress toward meeting your financial goals and net worth performance now and throughout retirement
- Strategize action plans for the worst-case scenario
- Plan for an abundant emergency fund
- Insure against the unforeseen
- Plan for your estate and beneficiaries after your death

*Stifel does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult with your legal and tax advisors regarding your particular situation.*