

MONEY SENSE

Genesis
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT INC.

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NEW BEGINNINGS, DEBT FREE

Intimidated? Unsure? Afraid? Confused?

This is how most of us feel about financial planning, especially in today's economy. With the new year, comes a new outlook on finances.

Finances don't have to be mysterious or complicated. They key's are to get educated, to prepare for any and all obstacles, to decide where you are, where you need to be, and what paths you will need to take to get where you are going. It is sad but true that we spend more time and energy worrying about the mistakes we have made or will make and forgetting that doing something is always better than doing nothing. Will you make mistakes? Sure! You can use this series as a guide to help you avoid the most common mistakes listed.

First of all you need to kick the excuses to the curb. You are not too busy. You are smart enough to understand. It's not too overwhelming. You do have time. If you continue to make excuses why you can't do something, you will eventually believe them and never get anything done. How carefully you protect and invest those dollars is up to you.

Ask yourself:

- 1) Is your money earning the best return?
- 2) Have you sufficiently protected your assets?
- 3) Are you taking full advantage of tax-free options?
- 4) Is your money as accessible as you need it to be?

If you answer "no" to all these questions or you're not sure, it's time to face these money mistakes head on.

Nothing should interfere with your financial plan. Don't be a victim of poor money management: take control of the situation now. You earned it! Don't you want to keep it?!

Let 2009 be your chance to turn over a new leaf and get a handle on not only your finances, but your life. You will find that with proper planning, and preparation, using new techniques will not only help you see what mistakes you have made in the past, but what not to do in the future. Over this series, we will be discussing The Ten Most Common Money Mistakes.

Dollar \$aver\$:

Free Job Help

Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Workers Program provides grants to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to provide free job placement and other assistance to those who've lost jobs due to plant closings and mass layoffs, those who were self-employed and/or displaced homemakers. In some cases, intensive job training and support services such as childcare may be available. Visit www.cfda.gov and search for program number 17.260

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program provides up to 78 weeks of weekly allowance (after employees have exhausted state unemployment benefits) to workers who have lost jobs because of increased imports or outsourcing. Certain criteria must be met to qualify. Visit www.cfda.gov and search for program number 17.245

Targeted Classifieds— focus your job search in your field of interest by using sites like metacrawler.com. Use key search terms like "engineering jobs" to get targeted results.

Payment Address

Genesis Financial Management
P.O. Box 100280
Atlanta, GA 30384-0280

STOP THE PRESSES!!!!:

NEW LOCKBOX ADDRESS

Effective **SEPTEMBER 1**, all Money Order Payments should go to our **NEW LOCKBOX ADDRESS:**

PO Box 100280

Atlanta, GA 30384-0280



Get Free Tax Help!

For those living in the Tampa area, Genesis counselors can help you prepare your 2008 tax return for free. If your home is elsewhere, though, do not despair! Following are some free resources that you may be able to take advantage of:

IRS.gov— check out the “free-file” link on the left-hand side of the homepage for a list of free online filing services. Income limits apply.

Benefitbank.com— a do-it-yourself free filing program that’s very easy to use. Income limits apply.

VITA program— contact the IRS at 800-829-1040 to find your nearest volunteer income tax preparation site.

“Genesis offers FREE tax preparation by appointment only for all those located in the Tampa Bay area.”

Genesis Financial Management

Phone: (800) 460-8641
Fax (813) 866-5120

The 10 Golden Rules of Grocery Shopping

These timeless tips will guarantee money savings.

Does grocery shopping seem like a chore? It doesn’t have to be. Think of it as a game instead, and you’ll find that you can have fun on your next outing—and you’ll save tons of money at the same time. Just like any game, though, grocery shopping requires a bit of strategy. Just follow these 10 rules and you’ll always walk away a winner.

- 1) **Read grocery ads before shopping.** Study these ads and build your menu around sales items. You will save a fortune over time.
- 2) **Navigate the store like a pro.** Make a beeline for the back of the market and try to avoid the tempting center aisles. Food companies pay big bucks to get their items on the end aisles so be careful!
- 3) **Get organized.** Make a list and stick to. Also give your self a spending limit. Get all the items you need first, and if you have money left over, that can be used for those wants.
- 4) **Do the math.** Always

look at the price per ounce located on the shelf. The lowest price doesn’t always mean you are getting the best deal. You could be paying more.

- 5) **Study your store’s selling patterns for sales.** Some stores offer “buy one, get one free” sales on certain items, and then the next week only \$1 off. Hold off on purchasing certain items until you know they will be at their rock-bottom price. Then, stock up.
- 6) **Learn the tricks of their trade.** Just because the sale says “buy 10 containers of yogurt for \$5” doesn’t mean you have to purchase all 10 to get the sale price. That is just a trick advertisers use to get you to purchase more of an item.
- 7) **Use coupons (wisely).** Read more and save more. Check out the Sunday paper for valuable coupons. It might be in your best interest to purchase two or three papers. Seek out stores that double or triple coupons. Most importantly, do not use coupons to save on items that you would never

purchase in the first place.

- 8) **Save rain checks for a rainy day.** When an advertised item is on sale and there aren’t anymore in stock, ask for a rain check and cash it in on those sales when it is convenient for you.
- 9) **Layer, layer, layer.** Use a manufacturer’s coupon with items already on sale at the grocery store. Some people call this “layering,” others call it “stacking” — but it’s really a simple way of “saving!”
- 10) **Watch the register.** You will be surprised how many errors supermarket scanners make. Keep a watchful eye on the display as the cashier scans each product. Make sure that discounts for sales and coupons are applied. Also, make sure that the clerk keys in the proper produce codes for perishables without price tags so that you’re not paying for exotic mushrooms when you’re buying bananas.

Please Note: Contributions Not Tax Deductible

To all of our clients who are in the process of filing their 2008 federal tax returns— please note that the monthly contributions you make to Genesis as part of your Debt Management Plan are not tax deductible, per a recent IRS ruling.

While Genesis is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, the contri-

butions you make are considered to be for services rendered and not as charitable donations. The only tax deductible contributions allowed to a Debt Management Company such as Genesis are contributions made directly to the educational mission of that organization. Genesis has a

very active financial literacy program and engages in extensive outreach and educational efforts. If you wish, donations can be made to these efforts separate and apart from your regular monthly contributions.

Please contact us with any questions.

Visit our New and Improved Website: www.YourGFM.com