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Fact

1.89%... net return of the Government Securities Investment Fund (G Fund) in 2013; the new myRA plan is based on the G Fund.

- Treasury Department

Quote

Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication

- Leonardo da Vinci

When should you engage a wealth advisor?

A client recently posed this question to me during a meeting. She was inquiring for her son, daughter-in-law and their growing family. I started to answer the question and paused. The answer for this simple straightforward question – it depends. Often individuals immediately reflect on the amount of money in their investment portfolio, net-worth or income level when contemplating hiring a wealth advisor or financial planner. Though these considerations are very important, this practical and simple focus on purely numbers is not enough. In addition to understanding your financial position you should also consider other factors, many of which go beyond the financials and require reflection of your skills, aspirations and legacy.

Do you have the desire to re-prioritize? Many of our clients have an extremely high financial I.Q. and have been a tremendous steward of their financial affairs. They are proud of their prudent financial decisions, as they should. However, managing the wealth of a household is a daunting task, which requires financial savvy and desire. Over time the desire to oversee the household's finances at the necessary level may wane. Or, one may simply decide to spend their discretionary time doing something else more enjoyable. If managing the wealth of your household continues to be less of a priority, not only is it fine, it's common. Remember, engaging the services of a financial planner is not necessarily an indictment of one's financial acumen, it may be the recognition that you would rather spend your time elsewhere.

Many hands make light work. Successful individuals recognize that teamwork can yield better results and lighten the burden. The expertise of a trusted financial advisor will undoubtedly aid in organization, development and implementation of your financial plan. They may also provide investment management services, assisting in the design and execution of your investment portfolio. These services provide structure and clarity for the team and shape the role for each member. The financial planning firm's role of preserving and growing the family's wealth will enable family members to focus their efforts on what they do best. This allows the earning family member to develop their professional craft and potentially increase their income.

Can accountability help you reach your goals? Did you have a New Year's resolution? Were you able to keep it? I hope you were able to answer yes to both questions. By spring, many of us can hardly recollect our New Year's resolutions, let alone kept them. What if someone was constantly reminding you of your goals, would it help? We believe accountability does help. One role of a financial planner is to be a "professional nag." Though it is a simple role, it is a critical. A financial advisor has great responsibility to assist one in achieving the goals they indicated as important to them. Through regular review meetings with a financial planner, accountability can be achieved and your goals accomplished.

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When should you engage a wealth advisor? cont...

Serenity through continuity. A common strategy in managing household chores is often to divide and conquer, which works well when members of a household have a proclivity for a particular task. What if the task is managing the wealth of the household and the desire and necessary skill set is had by only one spouse? By engaging a wealth advisor you can ensure your unique financial circumstances are understood and know the responsibility of managing the family's wealth will be transitioned appropriately. Would you not want to be involved in the decision regarding the trusted advisor who will be counseling your spouse and heirs? The decision to work with a financial advisor is one of great importance. Imagine the relief knowing, first hand, that your financial affairs will be attended to in the manner you have been accustomed.

Identifying the right time to engage financial planning services is not as simple as surpassing milestones on account statements or tax returns. In addition to understanding your financial position you should also consider other factors, many of which go beyond the financials and require reflection of your skills, aspirations and legacy. We all have a unique journey through life, and partner with trusted advisors at different points. So, when should you engage a wealth advisor? It depends...it's never too early and it's never too late.

Waller Financial thanks all of our clients who allow us to serve as their trusted advisor. The firm remains committed to assisting individuals in the pursuit of their desired lifestyle and legacy. If you know someone considering the value of a financial planner, we would be pleased to assess their need to engage the services of a wealth advisor.

[Investment Management]

Five Year Bull Market...Really?

In describing the investment markets, Sir John Templeton remarked, "Bull markets are born on pessimism, grow on skepticism, mature on optimism and die on euphoria." This past March 9th marks the five year anniversary of the current bull market. This is significant for a couple of reasons, which are the depths from which this market has risen and the length of time it has been ongoing. The definition of a bull market is a period of time where the market (S&P 500 Index will serve as our proxy for the market) gains 20% or more without a decline of at least 20%. As of the time of this writing, the current bull market is the 6th longest since 1928. If things continue to progress, it could become the 2nd longest later this year. The longest was the '87 - '00 bull market. Of the 11 bull markets since WWII, only 3 have actually made it through 6 years.

Currently, this market is up approximately 180% from the March 9, 2009 bottom. However, if you expand your view and look back a little further, you will see the market is only up about 20% since the March 2000 peak². That equates to less than 1.5% per year during a period in which we experienced two of the more recent and significant bear markets, along with a couple bull markets.

The nickname ascribed to this current bull market has been the Stealth Bull because very few people have actually benefited from the run up. That is one of the reasons we feel this market has room for additional modest growth. We have concerns though: geopolitical issues, domestic political infighting, and Federal Reserve policy to name a few. In weighing our concerns against the rationale for optimism, our scale tilts toward continued growth, albeit modest. That does not mean the market will not produce negative returns during various patches though. In fact, we would be

concerned if we did not see periods of negative returns, as that is a sign of euphoria. Simply put, we do not foresee a period where the market declines by 20% or more in the near term.

The question then becomes, where are we? We believe this market is certainly past the pessimism and skepticism phases and entering into a phase of maturation. What we do not know is how long this phase will last. We are advocating portfolios that are well-diversified across numerous asset classes, not just stocks. Our focus remains on creating portfolios that balance the need for portfolio growth with the desire to avoid permanent loss of principal.

To know where we are, we must remember where we have been. Most importantly to know where we are going, we must have a plan. A financial plan is not a product, but instead, a process. One that is dynamic and ever changing to take into consideration the realities of life - the economy will go through good and bad times, jobs will be lost, promotions will be had, loved ones will need financial help, the markets will go up and down - but a financial plan will navigate us through to your desired destination.

At Waller Financial, we believe in emotionless investing, built upon a well-crafted financial plan that places the achievement of each client's long-term goals at the forefront. If you would like more information on how your financial plan is designed to help achieve your personal goals, contact us today.

1,2 Morningstar Office 2013

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[Financial Planning]

Do Your Due Diligence

What does mid-season college hockey have to do with your portfolio's investment performance? The answer is most likely, absolutely nothing. However, when I was asked to provide color commentary for the Buckeyes of The Ohio State University this season, I began to make an unlikely connection. Although my method of discovery was arduous, the lesson learned will undoubtedly pay dividends in the future.

When I first received the invitation, I was excited and admittedly naive to believe my audience would be appreciative of an affable, bumbling, ex-hockey player providing mildly entertaining commentary. At the time, I remember thinking; I've played the sport almost my entire life, I know the strategy of the game, and I've watched countless games on TV! Unfortunately, as my broadcasting debut drew closer, my excitement turned to fear and my nerves were quick to remind me I was woefully unprepared.

At that moment I decided to harness the power of Waller Financial's investment process and apply it to the task at hand. Really, you ask??? Well, here's how. My goal was to provide well timed, concise, and colorful analysis to my audience as the game unfolded. I assimilated this to the mission we have at Waller Financial to provide timely, objective, and consistent investment advice to our clients as the markets rise and fall. As a firm, we've found that most often, success in the investment world is the result of excellent due diligence and the methodical execution of your investment strategy. The audience I would be entertaining would be no more appreciative of meaningless commentary than our clients would be of poor investment returns. And so, the light bulb upstairs went on - I needed to prepare myself to be successful.

I immediately began watching every sports analyst I could find on TV while scrambling to meet with coaches and players to learn what their strategies were for success. My goal was primarily to gain insight on key strategies, but was also to learn how to process that knowledge into a deliverable that was pleasant for my audience. The whole process reminded me of how our investment committee at Waller Financial meets regularly with portfolio managers, investment analysts, and other professionals in our industry to learn how they are managing for long-term success. We are constantly evaluating new investment options and strategies as they surface to ensure our financial planners have the best tools available to craft the right portfolio for each of our clients.

While I did not do myself any favors by cramming all the aforementioned activities into the week before, I was able to expand not only my knowledge base but also improve my ability to apply that knowledge successfully.

As a player I was never very appreciative of the work that TV or radio analysts put in before each and every game, in fact I must confess, I always assumed they simply showed up and called the game! I've since learned they are no different than the professionals here at Waller Financial, or any other walk of life, who are desirous of providing their very best through thorough preparation and meticulous execution.

I've since been called back to cover 5 other games...not too shabby for a face that was clearly made for radio!

Chris Olsgard is CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ practitioner and Partner at Waller Financial Planning Group.

[News & Notes]

Anniversary



Waller Financial would like to thank and congratulate Tiffany Shively, Administrative Operations Manager, who celebrated her ten year anniversary with the firm in March. Tiffany continues to serve as a key member of the Waller Financial team, overseeing new associate training, workflow management and implementation of compliance procedures.

Chili Cook-Off

Waller Financial held the Seventh Annual Chili Cook-Off in February. Fun was had by all, but there can only be one winner. Sandy Vidosh took home the first place ribbon and coveted ladle award with her Easy Tailgating Chili recipe.



Keep in Touch

Stay connected with Waller Financial Planning Group on Facebook! In addition to investment news and updates, we will be certain to keep you up-to-date on the activities within our office, our community involvement and the accomplishments of our staff!

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