

February 20, 2019

# Financial Fitness: Setting SMART Goals

WEALTH MANAGEMENT  
BY DAVID BRINKMAN

SHARE WITH A COLLEAGUE



DOWNLOAD PDF



This article was originally published in *Wedgewood Life* magazine and is reprinted with their permission.

Happy New Year! As the calendar flips and a New Year begins, many individuals begin thinking of their resolutions for the upcoming year such as taking better care of themselves, spending more time with loved ones, or learning a new hobby. Studies have shown that when individuals take the time to write out their goals they are 50% more likely to achieve them. However, only 3% of adults actually put pen to paper and write down their goals. Another sobering statistic is that 92% of New Year's goals fail by January 15th of that year.

The first step in any goal setting process is to establish a **S**pecific **M**easurable **A**chievable **R**elevant **T**ime-Bound (**SMART**) goal. As American poet, Bill Copeland said, "The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score."

Let's apply this to your personal finances. Some common financial goals for individuals include planning for retirement, planning for a young family, or overall estate planning. For example, the retirement goal might be to retire in the next 10 years while maintaining your current lifestyle. By applying the SMART parameters, we define the specific goal. The next step would be to measure your current financial position, including assets and liabilities, current income, expenses, and savings. Next, make some reasonable forward-looking assumptions to project how achievable it is to reach your goal during your time frame.

A goal for younger families could be to ensure the family is able to pay off the mortgage and fund your children's education should something unfortunate happen. For successful individuals that have accumulated wealth, a goal could be to ensure that their heirs, and the institutions they chose, receive future assets in a tax-efficient manner.

The process of setting and accomplishing your financial goals is the same whether it be around retirement planning, planning for a young family, or overall estate planning. While this sounds straight forward enough, successful individuals recognize that there are only so many hours in the day and individually they can only achieve so much. This is where an advisor can play a critical part by providing clarity and accountability to the goal, establishing a pathway, and monitoring financial progress.

The 92% of people who do not achieve their New Year's goal do not set out to fail. But in failing to plan, they are more likely to fail. As it relates to financial affairs, if you want to be amongst the 8% of people whom accomplish their goal you need to get specific and write out your plan to financial success.

*Material discussed is meant for informational purposes only, and it is not to be construed as investment, tax, or legal advice. Individual situations can vary, therefore, this information should be relied upon when coordinated*

with individual professional advice.

SHARE



## You've heard our thoughts... We'd like to hear yours

The Schneider Downs Our Thoughts On blog exists to create a dialogue on issues that are important to organizations and individuals. While we enjoy sharing our ideas and insights, we're especially interested in what you may have to say. If you have a question or a comment about this article – or any article from the Our Thoughts On blog – we hope you'll share it with us. After all, a dialogue is an exchange of ideas, and we'd like to hear from you. Email us at [contactSD@schneiderdowns.com](mailto:contactSD@schneiderdowns.com).

Material discussed is meant for informational purposes only, and it is not to be construed as investment, tax, or legal advice. Please note that individual situations can vary. Therefore, this information should be relied upon when coordinated with individual professional advice.

© 2019 Schneider Downs. All rights-reserved. All content on this site is property of Schneider Downs unless otherwise noted and should not be used without [written permission](#).

OUR THOUGHTS ON

[BENEFITS, TAX, WEALTH MANAGEMENT](#) BY [SCOTT RAIN](#)

11.7.2019

2020 Retirement Plan Limitations

[READ MORE >](#)

Register to receive our weekly newsletter with our most recent columns and insights.

SUBSCRIBE FOR UPDATES

#### MOST RECENT

### Delaware Unclaimed Property

**PUBLIC COMPANIES, STATE AND LOCAL TAX**  
**BY MATTHEW DODGE | 11.20.2019**

If your business is domiciled in the state of Delaware or is currently doing business in the state, your company may have significant Delaware unclaimed ...

READ MORE

#### MOST POPULAR

### Tax Treatment of Deferred Revenue in a Taxable Stock Acquisition

**MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS, TAX**  
**BY GARY SLIMAN | 6.1.2016**

The general rule under Internal Revenue Code §451 is that an item of income shall be included in gross income for the taxable year or receipt unless ...

READ MORE



Have a question? Ask us!

We'd love to hear from you. Drop us a note, and we'll respond to you as quickly as possible.

ASK US

# CONTACT US



## PITTSBURGH

One PPG Place, Suite 1700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

[contacts@schneiderdowns.com](mailto:contacts@schneiderdowns.com)

p:412.261.3644 f:412.261.4876



## COLUMBUS

65 East State Street, Suite 2000  
Columbus, OH 43215

[contacts@schneiderdowns.com](mailto:contacts@schneiderdowns.com)

p:614.621.4060 f:614.621.4062



## WASHINGTON, D.C.

1660 International Drive, Suite 600  
McLean, VA 22102

[contacts@schneiderdowns.com](mailto:contacts@schneiderdowns.com)

p:571.380.9003



An Association of  
Independent Accounting Firms

FOLLOW US



CLIENT PORTAL



SUBSCRIBE FOR UPDATES

E-mail

SUBMIT



[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

## LEGAL INFORMATION

### SITE MAP

Schneider Downs is a Top 60 independent Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firm providing accounting, tax, audit and business advisory services to public and private companies, not-for-profit organizations and global companies. We also offer Internal Audit; Technology Consulting; Software Solutions; Personal Financial Services; Retirement Plan Solutions and Corporate Finance Services. Schneider Downs is the 13th largest accounting firm in the Mid-Atlantic region and serves individuals and companies in Pennsylvania (PA), Ohio (OH), West Virginia (WV), New York (NY), Maryland (MD), and additional states in the United States with offices in Pittsburgh, PA and Columbus, OH.

© 2019 Schneider Downs & Co., Inc. Maryland license number 35239