

The Time Is Now



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The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Board of Standards is celebrating 25 years of existence this year. This brings to mind the fact that personal financial planning is a relatively new area of expertise. One may even say the industry is in the growth stages, still finding its way as it evolves as the needs of families become more complex.

During this period, unfortunately the financial industry had spent a vast majority of the last 25 years (or longer) developing products and their brands. Their focus was on accumulation of assets and not as much on personal financial planning. Now that the baby boomers are tapping the financial system and need answers, we are seeing a greater emphasis on the need for planning.

Over that 25 year period we have seen many changes in the business, government, and planning community. For example, corporations have been moving away from defined benefit pension plans and towards defined contribution plans like 401(k) plans and SIMPLE IRA programs. We have seen the retirement age for receiving full social security benefits increase. In my opinion, the government has done nothing to head off the eventual insolvency of social security. When I was a junior in college, they told me to never expect to receive a social security check because it

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will be out of funds, which was in 1984, and there have been a lot of politicians in and out of Washington since then.

All of these developments lead to one common theme for our financial futures; if it is to be it is up to me. We are on our own for financial security. Pensions, a job for life, and real estate as your single largest investment all have led us up to the present environment. There is no one person or entity to depend on; you have to figure it out on your own...or do you?

You have all heard the phrase; it is the bow not the arrow. It is not the golf club, but your swing that creates a successful golf game. It is not your tennis racquet, but your form, patience, and technique that makes a successful tennis game. It is not your running shoes, but your desire and perseverance to win that makes you a successful runner (I think I've made my point). Well in planning it is the plan and the planner, not the product that creates the successful implementation of your financial vision for your family. The coordinating of your family goals, desires, and comfort level with investment risk all tied together by your financial team is the easiest way to execute your plan. This means your CPA, attorney, independent insurance consultant and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional work together on your behalf to help solve your financial challenges.

There has never been a better time to get your act together. The challenges ahead for your family will need planning, patience, expertise, and persistence to execute your financial plan. Find someone who will tell you the truth, treat you like family, and guide you for the next 25 plus years. The time is . . . Now.

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