

The 10 Steps



SAGE FINANCIAL STRATEGIES

... Providing the skills and experience necessary to define and achieve your financial goals

The 10 Steps to the Road to Purposeful Financial Living:

Using The 10 Steps, Sage Financial Strategies has assisted countless individuals and households in understanding their money, gaining control of their cash, and most importantly living satisfied, fulfilled and happy financial lives. Review each of The 10 Steps to discover what you and your Accountability Partner will work on together to achieve purposeful financial living.

1. Attitude: *Understand your current attitude and beliefs towards your finances.*

A reality check with regard to your views about something that you spend over 1/3 of your time pursuing is in order. It is important to realize how you view your finances - are they unimportant, all consuming, or just a tool like any other that you can use as you please?

What do I have to do? Come with an open mind. Realize that by changing your attitudes and what you associate with something, you can change your life for the better. Some individuals have very healthy attitudes about money and just need financial mentoring while others need more guidance in building a different belief system with regard to their money.

What will my Accountability Partner do? If you have a great attitude about your finances and money then we will take you to Step 2. If not, we will help you to shed false ideas and ideals that you may have learned. We will show you how a change in your attitude can change your actions and ultimately your quality of life.

2. Learning: *Learn what money can do for you if handled properly and what it can do to you if handled improperly.*

Understanding how money works in today's financial environment can make the difference between watching your money wither away over time or accumulating wealth intelligently and systematically while taking advantage of every available personal financial management strategy.

What do I have to do? Put on your thinking cap. This is where you learn the nuts and bolts about personal finance that for some incredible reason we were never taught in school.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will teach you basic truths about personal finance that will allow you to understand how money works. We will also make sure to tailor the subject matter depending on your current financial needs and situation. As you progress on your road we will continually teach you about the next step so that you are making sound financial decisions with confidence.

3. Position: *Determine your current financial position.*

It is impossible to get anywhere if you don't know where you are. You must list your assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses and understand each of them. Trying to make great financial leaps without solid current financial information is like trying to jump while standing in the middle of a 30 foot bowl of Jell-O, every time you try to jump the Jell-O gives and you end up exactly where you started.

What do I have to do? Bring all of your financial paperwork, it's time to make sense of it all and finally get it organized and understand it.

What will my Accountability Partner do? We will document each facet of your current financial position in an easy to understand format including your inflows and outflows of cash, liabilities, assets and equity. When we are finished with this step we will present to you a very clear picture of your current financial position and where all of your money is coming and going.

4. Values: *Discover what you truly value in your life.*

The number of incredibly wealthy yet miserable people is a testament that money does not, no matter how much we would like to believe it, provide happiness. Discovering what you truly value will help you to take a limited resource, your money, and apply it to those things that have the potential of truly enriching your life.

What do I have to do? Bring your heart. Be ready to identify those things in life that you truly value. Are you ready to liberate yourself from what everyone else, including the advertisers with their billion dollar budgets, are telling you are important and discover what's important to you? This step will take you there.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will guide you through an exercise that will help you define what you value. At the end of the exercise you will not need influence from any outside force. You will be rooted in yourself and confident in your values. We will then show you how to always make financial decisions based on what you value. It is a simple yet very effective exercise that takes less than 10 seconds every time you have to make a financial decision.

5. Evaluation: *Evaluate your current financial position.*

Once you have discovered what it is that you value it's time to evaluate if your limited resources are being directed to those things that will bring you happiness and fulfillment. If so – great! If not – maybe it's time for a few changes.

What do I have to do? Be honest with yourself. The hardest time to be honest is when it might require you to make a change in your life. If you find that your money is not going to something that you truly value it is time to make a change and redirect those funds to a more valuable place.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will help you sift through your current expenditures and financial position. We will use our knowledge and the experience we have gained from assisting so many others to your benefit. We will allow you to bring your financial position into balance so that it starts providing you with value.

6. Goals: *Develop your financial goals.*

Once you have discovered what you truly value in your life it is time to develop some financial goals that will help you achieve what you value. During this process of goal development you must always keep your eye on balance. What are your highest values and how do you allocate your limited resource to those values – this is the challenge. These goals will take into consideration your current income and use certain assumptions about your future earnings, inflation, savings, investing and spending habits. Of course these goals will be established while focusing on what you truly value so that you will enjoy the journey as well as the destination.

What do I have to do? Bring your dreams. This is where you learn that, unless your dream is simply to collect a lot of dollars, dreams are rarely about money, however, in most cases a financial plan relating to each dream gives that dream a better chance of becoming a reality. Before we meet, you will need to think about what you want to do while you are here on earth. Make sure that what you are dreaming about fits into what you value – if not, you may want to adjust your dreams or revisit what you value.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will document your dreams and relate them to time sensitive financial goals. A timeline will be set and funds will be allocated on a monthly basis to that dream. A goal without a timeline is just a great idea or a wish that has little to do with reality and its likelihood of being realized is incredibly low. In addition, we will help you to stay true to your values during this step.

7. Budget: *Create a road map to your goals.*

The big “B” word. Budgets usually have a negative connotation, however, all endeavors require a process, and a process requires a measurement tool. Our measurement tool is your budget. We will budget only once and re-adjust twice over a 90-day period. The only time your budget will change or even be spoken of again is when you decide to make a significant financial change in your life. Your Accountability Partner will show you how to add freedom producing consistency to your financial life through your budget.

What do I have to do? Believe it or not by the time we get here your budget is almost complete! There are just a few items that must be adjusted and reviewed to make sure that we have accounted for everything.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will provide the structure needed to easily view your monthly budget. We will show you how it relates to your values and your goals. You will absolutely love your budget because you will have created it. The word budget will no longer be perceived as limiting or constricting. You will view it positively, as a tool that provides you with freedom from financial uncertainty because you will know that you are doing exactly what you want to be doing and why you are doing it.

8. Structure: *Set up your banking structure.*

Using investment houses and financial institutions you will set up your personal finances so that they can be placed on autopilot. You will no longer have to think about how much you are spending on a daily and weekly basis. Once your banking structure is established, you will no longer have to think about meeting your goals – they will be met because you have built a financial machine that will produce your goals over time.

8. **Structure:** *Continued.*

What do I have to do? At the center of every process there is mechanical function that allows it to operate efficiently. Setting up your banking structure will provide that efficiency. What you will do during this step is make yourself available for account closings and openings, address changes on your bills and other small tasks that are easy to perform yet become powerful tools. Once your structure is in place, your day-to-day financial life goes on autopilot. You will still be involved with consistency and review, however, mundane daily financial tasks are over and freedom is yours.

What will your Accountability Partner do? We will provide the necessary steps to perform the leg work that needs to be completed to set up your banking structure and personal financial monthly cash flow. With your help we will close unneeded accounts and open accounts that will serve you. In addition, we will assume the responsibility of paying all of your bills and providing you with spending cash on a weekly basis. Does this sound too good to be true? – It is good and it is true.

9. **Consistency:** *Living each day the way you planned it.*

You need to be absolutely consistent on a daily basis with your finances. The process does allow you to dip into your accounts whenever you want and grab some cash to satisfy a craving. After all it is your money. However, that would be like joining a gym and never showing up – what a terrible waste. Showing up is the only way to get a return on your money. Make sure that your time and money are directed to those things which you find worthwhile and value. Consistency is the key to every success story and your Accountability Partner will show how unbelievably easy it is to stay consistent.

What do I have to do? Just what you came to do! Live each day knowing that you are on the road to your dreams and meeting your financial goals. Be consistent – it's easy when someone you trust is watching out for you. Your job is to do what you do best and allow Sage Financial Strategies to do what it does best.

What will your Accountability Partner do? Your Accountability Partner will keep track of your income, savings, investments and expenditures within the budget you have created together. During your periodic meetings your financial activities will be reviewed to keep you in touch with your finances and help you to keep your behavior consistent. He will also be a proactive advisor in all of your financial decisions ensuring that they are professionally researched and have a positive impact on your financial life.

10. **Review:** *Periodically you must review your financial position and compare it with your financial goals.*

On a monthly basis, we will review your financial position and compare it with your financial goals. Are you on track? Why or why not? Use the “Whys” to encourage yourself to stay on track and use the “Why Nots” as lessons that you can apply in the following months. This is a great formula because the more “Whys” you have, the more encouragement you will get, which will help you to eliminate the “Why Nots”.

What do I have to do? Review your financial performance. Each month you will receive a personal financial report. It will include a Balance Sheet that will show you your current financial position and an Income Statement that will itemize how much you made and how much you spent during the past month. These statements will also compare reality with your budget. Are you on budget or not – and why. When the answer is consistently “On Budget” then you are living your financial life the way you planned it and are on the road living a purposeful financial life.

What will your Accountability Partner do? During each month we gather information regarding your financial activities. At the end of the month we summarize this information and mail you your bank statements and paid bills along with your Balance Sheet and Income Statement as noted above. In addition, when you are a SFS client you have access to your Accountability Partner regarding your current finances and any financial decisions you are facing. Lastly, we can forget taxation. At the end of each year SFS will prepare your taxes with the information that we have been tracking all year.

Sage Financial Strategies

Sage Financial Strategies provides unbiased personal financial information and services to individuals and families to assist them in setting, maintaining and reaching their financial goals. SFS has been accomplishing this for over 10 years by providing training, a financial management structure and personal hands-on financial guidance to its clients.

Sage Financial Strategies provides the following services:

- ✔ Money Mentoring
- ✔ Tax Planning and Preparation

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