



WEEK 6

MONEY MINDSET

Setting Financial Goals for the Future

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Setting Financial Goals for the Future

Whether you're a young person planning how to finance your education, a college graduate with some money to spend who is planning to pay off your debt, or a senior planning how to leave your assets to the next generation, **financial planning is how you think ahead to make sure you achieve your goals.**

Financial planning is an ongoing process that looks at your entire financial situation in order to:

- create strategies for achieving your short- and long-term goals
- reduce your stress about money
- support your current needs
- help you build a nest egg for goals such as retirement.



Creating a financial plan is important because it allows you to make the most of your assets and gives you the confidence to weather any bumps along the way. You can make a financial plan yourself or get help from a financial planning professional.

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Setting SMART Financial Goals

Learning how to set realistic financial goals is an important part of taking charge of your money. Whether you're trying to pay down debt or save for your first home, you need clear financial goals as well as a road map for reaching them.

1

Create financial goals.

Ask yourself: What do I want my life to look like in five, ten, or even 20 years? Do I want to own a car, or a house? Do I want to be debt-free? Pay off my student loans? Are kids in the picture? How do I imagine my life in retirement?

2

Track your money.

Next, figure out where you're starting from by looking at your monthly income and expenditures and creating a budget. You may need to track your spending for a few weeks or even months to come up with reliable numbers -- and remember to track everything, including groceries, car maintenance, rent, utilities, insurance, prescriptions, subscriptions, entertainment, gifts, clothing, vacations, and other expenses.

Then identify if there are any adjustments you can make to income and/or expenditures.

3

Create a plan.

Make a plan with steps you can take to reach your financial goal. Be sure to specify the amount, timeline and any other relevant details to make your goals concrete and quantifiable.

4

Monitor and adjust

Life changes and other factors can affect your financial goals. It's important to review your goals at least once a year to adjust expectations, chart your progress and review your priorities. Be prepared to adjust your goals or financial strategies as circumstances change.

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Setting SMART Financial Goals

The SMART goal model may help as you develop your plan.

SPECIFIC

Identify specific ways you can cut spending or make more money. For example, don't just say, "I'll try to save \$200 more a month." Get specific:

- I'm going to save \$60 a month by making my lunch instead of buying it at work."
- Instead of going out every Friday night, I'm going to save at least \$40 by staying in one Friday night each month.

MEASURABLE

Make sure there's a way to measure your progress. For example, if you're trying to save \$60 a month to pay down a debt more quickly, track your spending to make sure that's happening, and then check to make sure that you're actually increasing your monthly payments to creditors by \$60 a month.

ACTION-ORIENTED

A goal like "I'm not going to use my credit card as often" isn't measurable and will be hard to stick to. Instead, commit to a definite action, like "I will take all the credit cards out of my wallet so I can't make unplanned purchases."

REALISTIC

A goal should be achievable. For example, a goal of paying off your credit card debt within 3 years, given a structured realistic payment plan is achievable. But, a goal of paying off all credit card debt when you win the lottery will most likely not be attainable.

TIME-FRAME

Make sure your goals are time-limited. Setting a time frame for each goal is helpful, both to keep you focused and to help you measure your progress.

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language, but include relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed, so be positive when answering the questions.

INITIAL GOAL	Write the goal you have in mind
S	What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?
SPECIFIC	
M	How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?
MEASURABLE	
A	Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?
ACHIEVABLE	
R	Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?
RELEVANT	
T	What's the deadline and is it realistic?
TIME-BOUND	
SMART GOAL	Review what you have written, and craft a new goal statement based on what the answers to the questions above have revealed

SMART Financial Goal Setting Worksheet

Description of Goal	SPECIFIC Cost	MEASURABLE Monthly Amount	ATTAINABLE Method	REALISTIC Goal Length	TIME-BOUND Timeline
Build Emergency Fund	\$50,000	\$850	Automatic 10% income withdrawals	Long-Term	January 2020 to December 2025
Pay Down Debt	\$10,000	\$450	Debt Snowball Method	Long-Term	January 2020 to December 2022
Save for Car Down Payment	\$5,000	\$450	Use freed up monthly income from debt payoff	Short-Term	January 2023 to December 2023
Fun Money	\$200	\$200	Open separate bank account	Short-Term	Monthly Ongoing
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Tools and Resources



CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Financial wellness doesn't happen overnight. You need to take constant, intentional steps toward your financial goals to slowly work your way toward a total picture of wellness. Continue increasing your financial well-being and stability for the future with these resources and activities.

The earlier you begin taking control of your financial future, the easier it is to maintain and the larger the payoff.

Available to All
TELUS Health

Keeping Your Financial Future in Check article

Taking Charge of Your Money article

Please note: you will be directed to log into the TELUS Health website.

Available to US
VOYA

Set and Achieve Your Financial Webinar

Setting Goals Video

Available to Canada
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Financial Plan Video



MONEY MINDSET WEEK 6 SUBMISSION FORM

Complete the [Week 6: Challenge Submission Form](#) by **Tuesday, April 2** to earn one Wellbeing Ticket.