



Financial advice – understanding the basics

What is financial advice?

Just as you wouldn't leave the house without a map or GPS to plan to reach a destination far away, financial advice is a structured way to plan your financial prosperity and security. A financial adviser will guide you by:

- Helping you identify the 'destination' of your personal goals in life, such as an early retirement, travelling or building funds for children's education.
- Planning the best 'route' by developing strategies for saving, investing and contingency plans to protect your plan against life's hazards along the way.
- Assisting you to 'navigate' along your chosen route by keeping you on track with regularly reviewing your direction and making adjustments as required.

Why seek advice?

While most people can manage their day to day money issues, planning raises issues that you would not normally have to deal with, such as:

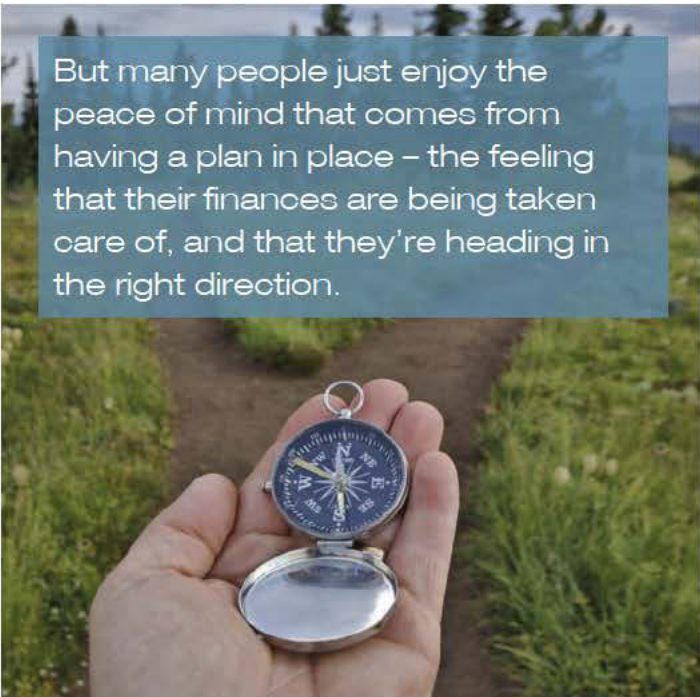
- Do you have the time to undertake the research and implementation for a detailed long-term plan?
- Do you know how to calculate how much you will need to save or invest to achieve the goals you have set?
- Can you keep up with constant changes in laws and regulations in tax, superannuation and social security?
- Are you on top of economic developments and market movements?
- Do you understand the huge range of investment and insurance products available and what will be most appropriate for your own personal situation?
- Do you have specific expertise in investment research, risk return profiles or asset allocation strategies?

By seeking financial advice you can delegate all of these tasks to a professional who has the appropriate expertise, knowledge and time to take care of the paperwork. Our advisers are trained and experienced specialists who dedicate their career to helping people map out a course toward their financial goals and plan a strategy to get there. They have the resources and technical support needed to provide comprehensive and objective advice. They are there to do the legwork, so that you can get on with life.

When should I seek advice?

Many people go to see a financial adviser at significant moments in their life where finances become increasingly important such as:

- getting married and starting a family
- taking time out for holidays
- starting your own business
- selling or growing a business
- paying off the mortgage
- receiving a pay rise
- suffering a serious illness or injury
- undergoing relationship problems such as separation or divorce
- being made redundant
- working out how to provide financial assistance for aging relatives
- receiving an inheritance
- making a sea change
- caring for grandchildren
- planning for care in later life.



But many people just enjoy the peace of mind that comes from having a plan in place – the feeling that their finances are being taken care of, and that they're heading in the right direction.

What to expect

Finding out where you want to go

The first meeting is all about finding out what's important to you and where you'd like to go. Your adviser will help you to identify what's most important in your life so that they can start to plan the financial roadmap to get you there.

They'll also explain what the process will be, how long it will take and what information will be needed so you can decide if you'd like to go ahead. All fees and charges are outlined up front, so if you do decide to go ahead you know how much it will cost. Our policy is to be completely transparent about fees and payments.

Developing a roadmap to get you there

The next step is to develop a strategy to suit your particular situation and goals. Your 'map' for the journey ahead. Your adviser will draw on their experience and training, as well as the research and technical resources of RI Advice Group, to develop a range of strategies and then identify which is the best for you. The strategy recommended will be presented to you in a written Statement of Advice.

Once you have understood and agreed on your roadmap, and you're comfortable to go ahead, you then instruct your adviser to implement your strategy.

Keeping you on the right track

Once the strategy and plans are in place, your adviser will can put a review period in place so that you can keep an eye on the progress of your journey and adapt your plans for any changes in your circumstances.

Life will continually throw up challenges that may mean you to have make adjustments and maybe even re-think goals. Your adviser is there to stand by you every step of the way with sound advice, objective judgement and a friendly ear to whatever concerns you may have about your future.

Need more information?

Visit the Financial Planning Association at www.goodadvice.com.au or contact Bernie Lewis Financial Solutions on (08) 8300 8300 to talk about your options today.