Decrease Your Expenses in 5 Easy Steps

The Sagicor Advisor January 08, 2019 money management

Preparing a budget each month can provide a clear picture of your income and expenses. Once you understand where your money goes you can plan and set realistic financial goals. One such goal is reducing your spending. Whether you are building your savings or adjusting your spending because of reduced income, there are simple ways you can successfully balance your budget.

Bargain Hunting

Look out for auctions and sales to purchase affordable, second-hand items. You can find these advertised on notice boards at your neighbourhood supermarket or church or online. By the same token, you can also raise money by selling items, in good condition, which you don't need or use such as clothing, toys, tools, furniture and books.

Reduce your loan payments

If you have several loans consider a debt consolidation loan at an institution with lower interest rates and better terms. A debt consolidation loan will combine all your loans and you will only have to repay one loan to your new institution.

Manage your fees

As with any product you should shop around and compare financial institutions when opening an account, borrowing money or getting a credit card. Review your statements and bank charges so you know what fees you are paying and whether you can avoid penalty charges.

The type of account you have can also save you money on fees. Find out whether your bank has an account tailored to students, professionals, small businesses or retired persons. Banks often offer some services free of cost to encourage customers to use them. Sign up for services such as internet or mobile banking and use your bank's ATM to save on fees.

Pay less for entertainment

Do not go overboard on your savings plan and cut back on all entertainment, it is important to relax and manage your stress with enjoyable activities. You can however, find frugal ways to unwind. Reduce your cable bill by cutting back on expensive movie or sports packages. Follow your favourite team via video news clips online or watch major events at a local restaurant. For at-home entertainment sign up for subscription movie services, read more or plan family entertainment nights.

Food for less

Food, whether groceries or dining out, is undoubtedly a major expense. You should aim to prepare your own meals more often than you dine out. Planning a weekly menu with affordable easy-to-prepare meals can help save time and money. You can also check for discounts at the supermarket, buy in bulk on high consumption items and try growing vegetables and herbs at home.

Your Sagicor Advisor can help you create and monitor a budget and can help you use it to guide decisions you make about managing your cash flow, investing or building a nest-egg for retirement. Your Advisor will begin with a fact-finding exercise that will get you started in identifying the major incomes and expenses for your household.