

DV8

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Have you figured out what the title means? It is not a Y-2K glitch or typo. "DV8" means "deviate." The dictionary defines deviate as "to turn aside from a course." I think that definition fits what I want to write about perfectly. It is exactly what I want you to do: "DV8." I want you to turn aside from the course that will take you down a route with no possibility of return: the route to financial disaster.

DV8 from all the bad advice you may have been getting and do two things right now for yourself and your financial future: Open your mind to some new possibilities, and be willing to try them for 90 days. At stake are your financial future and financial independence.

Are you going to stay in the same old rut, or is it time to blaze a new trail? (By the way, do you know what a "rut" is? It is a grave with open ends!)

If you are willing to do the two things I mentioned, welcome to the 21st century! The future will be challenging, but you are up to it. It will also be exciting and rewarding. If those two things were more than you are willing to invest in yourself, it might be best for you to just put this article aside and check out your local classified ads.

Are you ready to "DV8"? Good! Start by getting a real handle on what is going on inside your wallet and your checkbook. Does it seem like you put money into both and it just disappears? If that is the case, check for "leaks" in both of these areas. Let's begin with your wallet. Get out your wallet and pull out all of the credit cards you have stashed in those secret compartments. Did you get them all out? Good.

Take them cards over to your copy machine, and lay them out face-down and make a copy then flip them over and make another copy. You now have a record of all of the cards in your wallet and the account numbers, as well as the 800 numbers, if you ever need to call to report a lost card or cancel the card. For those who are willing to write or put this information on a computer, go ahead and do it. The whole purpose is to make a record so you know what you have. I would suggest going through this same exercise with the wallets of your spouse significant other and children. You also need to have a record of the cards they are carrying around. Do you feel like you are starting to take a little control of the financial world in which you have been lost? Do you feel like you have "DV8-ted" maybe just a little bit from where you were before reading this article? Good! Are you ready for some more?

Now let's tackle the checkbook. If your checkbook looks like most that I have seen, it may be time to consider buying a computer program to track what is going on inside that checkbook. There are quite a few good programs on the market today, such as "Quicken." One client to which I recommended this later told me that it saved his marriage!

Whatever you do, you need to get your checkbook in order. I would first suggest that you go through the painful task of writing checks no more than twice per month. No one needs more abuse than that! I would also suggest that you either mark every check written for a business

purpose with a special mark so you can make sure to take a deduction at tax time, or have a separate account just for business expenses. It will make life a lot easier for you and your accountant.

Do you make sure to list what the check paid for on the check stubs? If not, you need to do so, and include an explanation you can understand when you go back through your checkbook. If a check is written to an insurance company, is it for life insurance, auto insurance, disability insurance or liability? What is the policy number? Was it for an annual or quarterly premium? Is it personal or business? If personal, who is covered by this policy? Wouldn't be a good idea to be able to look at that check stub and figure all of that out? It may take a little longer when you write the check, but later, it could save you a lot of time and aggravation.

Have you sat down recently and figured out all the "fees" your friendly banker is charging you every month just to hold on to your money? It's time that you did. Pull out all of your statements and add up the charges. Amazing, isn't it? Never have so many been charged so much by so few for so little! I think it might be time to have a little chat with that friendly banker and suggest that he lower his fees, or the bank down the street may start to look better and better to you! It never hurts to ask.

While we are talking about the wallet and checkbook, it would also be a good idea to sit down and try to see where all of your money is going. A budget may be just the thing. I would start with all of your fixed expenses such as mortgage payment or rent, utilities, insurance, dues and overhead (both personal and business). It should be much easier now to see where all of your money is going each month. The other "leaks" in your wallet and checkbook will start to appear, and if you want to, you can "plug" those leaks.

Stop for a moment and look around. Do you notice anything different? Does the sun look a little brighter? Do the birds sound like they are singing a little louder? You like it "up here," don't you? Life is nicer up here, out of the rut you have been in for too long. Do you want to stay up here? Just keep reading my articles and keep your mind open to new ideas, and your future will be brighter! Enjoy!

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