

Star Trek Revisited

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Stardate 2005. You are the commander of your own office in a galaxy of managed care operations and HMOs. Your trusty CA is there to assist you with a staff that is up to any challenge. Your mission, if you are willing to accept it, is to help people and free them of sublaxations that are trying to take control of the galaxy.

There are evil forces trying to block you and your crew's mission. Asteroids are out to throw you off course and destroy you financially. They are called taxes and inflation, and they are on a collision course with your flagship, due to poor financial planning and even poorer advice. They constantly stalk the galaxy - but fear not, the universe has provided a force for you to combat these evil asteroids and set up a shield to protect you, your family and your money, allowing you and your money to work in harmony.

That shield will allow you to be "beamed up" to a higher level of understanding, so that you can take control and be the commander of your financial starship. Are you ready to take the controls? If so, fasten your seat belt, sit back, and let's kick this into warp speed and go where no chiropractor has gone before. May the force be with you!

Don't you wish it were just that easy? Wouldn't it be nice to be beamed up to a higher level of financial knowledge? There actually is a "force" out there that can get you to that higher level. That force can help you take control, and keep control, of your finances and your financial future. What is that force, you ask? It is these articles that I have been beaming down to you for over 20 years!

Where do you start before you kick this thing into warp speed? Why not begin by taking a look at your total financial picture. You need to make a list of all assets: your home, office, equipment, jewelry, collections, stocks, mutual funds, cash, and any other assets that you own. Once you have that, it is time to look at the liabilities: loans, school loans, mortgages, and any other debts that you have, including credit cards. Make sure that you make a note showing what interest rates you are paying and the amount of the monthly payments.

Once you have that completed, you need to get a complete listing of all of the insurance you own. Start by calling your agent and asking him or her to send you a list of all of your policies and what they are for. You also need to find out what the premiums are and how they are being paid. You might also ask for any suggestions on how you can improve your program and possibly save yourself some money. Make sure your agent sends all of this to you in writing.

Once you have all of this information, it is time to review it and see if any of your debts can be restructured to improve your cash flow, and save you some interest charges, too. Are all of your assets working for you and doing the best job? If not, then maybe it is time to consider some changes there as well.

How about your insurance portfolio? Are you getting the most for your money and taking advantage of deductibles to save on the premiums? Remember, the goal of this entire exercise is to understand what you have and see if it is doing the best job for you.

This is a good beginning, but it is only the first step. This entire exercise needs to be done at least every two years. Some items should be reviewed every year, but at this stage, every two years will work.

Once this has been done, you may want to set some goals. You can have short-term goals and long-term goals. An example of a short-term goal would be how much you want to build up in a "cash-emergency" fund. A long-term goal would be how much you want to have in assets when you retire. These goals also need to be revisited every two years.

Well, commander, how does it feel to be in control? Your financial starship is fueled and ready to take off. You have set a course, so sit back and enjoy the trip!

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