

Four Rings

Stanley Greenfield, RHU

There are four rings that are very important to me. The first is the wedding ring I have worn for many years. The other three rings keep me organized and save me many hours. They are the three rings inside my notebook where I keep many aspects of my financial world in order. Let me show you what I mean.

All of the statements that I receive from the various investments that I have go right into my notebook. I have dividers with the names of the funds or stocks on them. I keep the original slips confirming my initial investments, and from that point on, I always keep the year-end reports so I can see how I really did from year to year. As a new statement comes in, I discard the old one, so I always have a current sheet to show me where I am.

The funds in my retirement plan are in a separate section, so when I want to see what is going on in my retirement plan, I can turn right to that section. There's no searching around for lost forms. It's all there right in my notebook.

I also have a notebook for all of my insurance policies. I put all of my policies in the notebook and use dividers to separate them into categories: auto; life; disability; and homeowners. As I receive changes or endorsements, I just put them in the appropriate files. When I need to check on a policy, it's right there in the notebook. I also keep any proposals that I have on any policies. Every other year, I request an update on my policies and keep it in front of the notebook.

There are other things that can be kept in a notebook, so that when you need the information it is right there. Let's start with something very simple: When you buy a new item, many times you get an instruction booklet that comes with it, plus the warranty information. Where does it go? I know where mine used to go, but now it goes right into a notebook, so if I need it I know where to find it. I use a three-hole punch on it so it will clip right into the notebook. It won't get lost and I know where to find it.

You can even use a notebook to keep all of your records on any loans. The notebook will keep them in order and neat. You can also keep an amortization schedule in front and check it off as you pay down a loan. I hope that for your sake, this can be done in a thin notebook!

How about all those statements you get from your bank? Can you think of any better place to keep them? Use dividers to separate your various accounts.

Do you have an inventory of your house? How about your office? What if you had a loss? Do you have any way of proving what you have in those places? Why not keep it all in a notebook broken down by room. A picture of the items wouldn't hurt either.

Do you have any collections? Do they have an inventory? What about any good articles or reference

materials in your collection? Why not keep them all in a notebook, safe and sound?

Do you ever run across a great idea and then misplace the information? If you keep a notebook of good ideas, you can find them when you need them. You might even want to keep a separate notebook for your practice.

My wife got tired of clipping out recipes and then misplacing them. Now she has them in a notebook, and they are in various sections so she can find what she wants in a few seconds.

I am sure that there are a thousand other things that can be kept in a notebook. I have just scratched the surface. I hope this will inspire you to get really creative, and if you come up with some new ideas, please contact me so I can share them.

Stanley Greenfield, RHU
1829 Green Heron Court
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
Tel: (800) 585-1555
Fax: (904) 247-1266
stan@stanleygreenfield.com

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