

What does football have to do with finances? By Patti Handy

OK, I admit it. I like football. This season has been especially exciting to watch. Although I don't understand all the strategies just yet, I enjoy watching the carefully planned plays. Sometimes they work, sometimes they don't, but nevertheless, very fun stuff to watch.

As I'm watching the games, it occurs to me that football and finances have a lot in common. (I admit, sometimes it's hard for me to turn my 'work' brain off, even in the middle of an exciting game). The plays are carefully planned, the teams spend countless hours practicing and strategizing, there is an experienced coach that guides the team to victory and they never give up. Their goal is specific, understood by all and there is serious motivation to win. Do you see where I am going with this?

Your money matters, your financial roadmap, requires the same mindset as those big, bad, burly football players. If you don't have a specific plan in place, if you don't practice and don't have someone guiding you, you will probably not end up where you want to. When it's time to send your kids to college, go on that vacation or retire, where are those funds coming from? What if you lost your job unexpectedly? Do you have reserves to fall back on?

Imagine those football players running onto the field with no plan, no plays. It would almost be painful to watch. Complete chaos. Is that what we enjoy watching? Doubtful. So, is your financial picture complete chaos? If so, don't panic. It's never too late to get things in order.

Start by having a plan. Write down specific goals, what action steps are necessary to achieve those goals and by when. If lifestyle changes must occur, define what those changes are and commit to that change. Sit down and pull all your bills out for the last month. Determine your fixed expenses and compare that to what you actually spend every month. Sometimes this alone can be a real eye opener. Where does all that extra money go? The local coffee house? Lunch out? Those shoes you had to have? Here's an interesting statistic: If you saved \$4 per day (one coffee) for 5 days per week for 52 weeks and invested that money at 10%, do you know how much you would have after 40 years? Some would say about \$80,000, \$90,000 even \$100,000. Nope, you would have \$553,396. Wow. Compounding interest, your new best friend.

With the start of the New Year, I encourage you to spend some time and make a plan. You deserve this. If you need some help, seek guidance. Taking action is the most important step you can take. I wish you the best.

Patti Handy, Money Coach, is a CTA Certified Life Coach with nearly 25 years in the banking arena, including 6 years as a Sr. Mortgage Advisor. With Patti's unique combination of experiences, she helps clients take control of their money matters, create a wealth plan, consolidate debt and improve credit scores. Within a safe environment, she assists in empowering clients with the knowledge and tools necessary to move forward. Visit her website, www.wisdomwithinyou.com to download a free special report, "The First 5 Steps to Financial Freedom".