

CHAPTER ONE

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR EXPENDITURE

Introduction.

In a society of constant spending and entertainment, forgetting to intelligently spend your money is common. Credit card debt and bankruptcy have affected many individuals, but you can prevent this from happening to you.

In Nigeria today, one major economic challenge is the disparity between recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure. While economists say the ideal thing is for the government to spend more on capital projects, and less on recurrent expenditure, the reality is that over 70 per cent of the country's expenditure is recurrent.

Financial analysts say the reality for many people is similar. While they have been told that the ideal things are for them to plan, have budgets and saving- among other things, the reality is that they spend spontaneously, with a large chunk of their earnings going to "waste" on things they could do without.

Are you different? What do you spend your money on? Is your expenditure budget-based? These are some of the questions you have to consider in planning and managing your finances. It is not enough for you to say "I didn't waste the money; I spent it on useful things. " This is because financial experts insist that as long as you don't have a budget, you certainly will make some mistakes.

To avoid "eating" or "wasting" your future and to keep your expenditure in check, consider the following:

1. What do you spend money on?

The first thing you need to do once you decide to monitor your expenditure or to reduce how much you spend is to know what you spend your money on. Once

4. Are there any good debts?

Some debts do of course make financial sense. Mortgages will usually work out less expensive than renting and is a good financial investment in general. Interest-free credit is about as close to good debts as it comes.

5. Which debts should I clear first?

Any debts with high-interest rates should be the first to go. For example, student loan comes with very little interest added and this can be left until last. Priorities debts into high-interest rate debts and work down the list with the lowest interest debts left until last. Any debts that come with high penalty charges for late payments should also be cleared as soon as possible.

6. Shouldn't I at least have an emergency savings fund?

Having an emergency savings fund is important but more money will be available if debts are cleared first. Savings are savings and it does not matter if it's a regular savings account or an emergency saving fund. Clearing off interest-accruing debts will leave more disposable income in the future, which means savings can be build up quickly when debts are cleared. Saving before debts are cleared simply means the customer is contributing to the bank's profits.

7. So I should only create a savings fund when debt-free?

A savings fund should be left until a debt-free status has been achieved. Unless there are some circumstances whereby the consumer has mostly all zero or very low-interest debts, this should be the case. It simply makes some financial sense to clear off interest accruing debts and then build up a savings fund.

Many people save money with banks from which they are heavily indebted. This does not make any sense as the customer with savings is, in effect, borrowing their savings and being charged interest on it.

7. Trying to do it all yourself.

Another big mistake managers make is that they hardly delegate responsibilities because they believe that they are the only ones who can get the task done properly. Some managers don't delegate, because they feel that no one apart from themselves can do the key jobs properly. Experts say this is not only a source of de-motivation for workers; it can get the managers frustrated and stressed. To succeed, they say managers must learn to trust employees and delegate responsibilities because they just can't do it all themselves.

i. Basic Money Principles You Should Adhere To

To avoid financial problems, you must imbibe the habit of managing money efficiently. Whether you do all the work yourself or hire a professional, there are some basic money principles to be adhered to. It is also necessary to have answers to the following questions: What do you know about money? Do you understand money? Do you have a philosophy about how you use money? Experts say many people have little understanding of money; consequently, their finances are never in order regardless of how much money they have.

Below are simple money rules that you need to know:

1. Differentiate between needs and wants.

Many people end up spending their fortunes on things they do not need. According to experts, everything that people need revolves around food, shelter and clothing. They stress that a key aspect of financial planning is the ability to differentiate between needs and wants. Unfortunately, they say many people fail to do so. While it is true that in today's world many items, besides the basic needs, are necessary, the decision to have your house fitted with classic paintings by the great artist at great expense falls under wants. And there are many more

What is going to happen for the next 10 years? While it is up to you to decide, experts say failure to set a target, which is an improvement on your initial target, will only leave room for your competitors to displace you- that is if you are already at the top.

III. Six Ways to Enhance Your Credibility

You may not succeed in business if nobody believes in you. Here is how to make sure they do.

1. Be genuine about who you are.

The days are long gone when customers were impressed by an illustrious corporate name or a fancy job title. Customers are more likely to respect you if you present yourself as an individual rather than a plug-and-play representative. The moment you pretend to be more (or other) than you are, your credibility flies out the window. Be authentic, even if all you bring to the table is your enthusiasm.

2. Know the legitimate value of what you provide.

When you know- truly know- what your products and services are worth, you're unafraid to communicate both the strengths and the limitations of your offering. You 'll refuse to cave into unreasonable customer demands. You' ll stick to your firm's policies and procedures and explain to the customer why they make sense. You 'll will be strong and confident about what you can contribute, thereby creating credibility.

3. Have insight based on research and analysis.

Adding insights to a conversation automatically creates credibility. Insight comes from learning about a firm, the role it plays in the industry and the customers that it serves. Insight is strengthened when you develop multiple contacts (and thus

vii. Enquire about the likelihood of interest being frozen for some time.

It may be hard to avoid but stressing over debts will not bring a viable solution.

Taking a proactive approach immediately and contacting creditors to make them aware of the situation is the best solution. Unemployment is stressful enough without harassment from creditors. Customers do have legal rights and protection from creditor harassment.

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individual online, you should not arrange to meet him or her in private on your first face-to-face date. Experts note that when you arrange to meet a seller, choose somewhere public like a coffee shop and, if you can, take someone with you.

This, they say, is to forestall any act of intimidation, assault or fraud. The individual may have posed to be a saint while chatting with you but may decide to implement his or her criminal acts when he or she meets with you, especially when both of you meet in private.

2. Trade face-to-face

This is important for individuals involved in the business of buying and selling. Though there are trustworthy individuals to deal with online, the rising nature of online fraud has made it necessary for businessmen and women to deal face-to-face with their partners. Online users should endeavor to meet physically with whoever they are dealing with.

3. Be satisfied before making payments

Experts say you should make sure you are completely satisfied with whatever item you are buying before handing over any money to the other party. You must be happy with the deal before you make any payment, otherwise, you may have yourself to blame in the end.

4. Limit what you give out

Be strict when it comes to giving out anything to the other party. You should not give too much away. According to experts, you should only give the minimum necessary personal information to sellers and buyers on the site. This is to protect your individuality and keep your secret.

CHAPTER SIX

MARKETING RESEARCH ESSENTIAL FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

The business environment has become increasingly competitive and staying ahead of the competition is a major challenge for companies and their brands. It thus presupposes that remaining in business is a survival of the fittest. A potent platform to withstand the competition is through marketing research. To gain a significant share of consumers' minds, marketing research is the key that unlocks the insights.

Marketing research is equally helpful before any entrepreneur can venture into any business endeavor. It also helps organizations to weigh the options available before arriving at the best decision. The importance of marketing research cannot be underestimated in business. Marketing research is imperative to enable an organization to gain a significant edge in the market place. It is pertinent to state that marketing research helps organizations to identify gaps in the market to remain a dominant player.

1. There should be a clear purpose

For any organization to achieve its stipulated objectives, a clear and concise statement on the purpose of research should be documented. The purpose of the research should be stated in unambiguous terms. This enables the marketing researcher to achieve success in his work. The purpose should be overriding above all other interests as a research endeavor should be rid of primordial sentiments. The purpose of research should be a collective decision of the key officers. This is to ensure that there are no loopholes right from the initial stage of the research. Marketing research guides the organization in making a strategic business decision and its purpose should be without contradictions.