

The INVESTMENT LETTER

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Investing is More Than Math

Investing requires a tailored approach that takes into consideration several factors of your life. Some factors include the amount of risk you are comfortable taking, the amount of return you want your investments to produce, and your long-term goals from your investments. Saving for different financial goals, which has an impact on your portfolio decisions, is a very personal endeavor that often requires considerations beyond numbers.

In our experience, there is neither a “cookie cutter” portfolio nor a magic formula that can make investment decisions for you and your family. At Investment Counsel, we focus our services on providing unique investment guidance based on relationships, not formulas. We believe this approach benefits the clients for the following reasons.

Forward-Looking

Investment advice should be forward-looking, as the purpose of investing is to preserve and grow your nest egg for future goals. In recent years, there have been “Robo-Advisors” that have relied solely on using formulas to make investment decisions. These Robo-Advisors will enter into known values (age, children age, etc) to generate pre-determined portfolios.

Working with a professional on an on-going basis, rather than relying only on formulas, does a better job of achieving forward-looking goals. When you go to a doctor, you

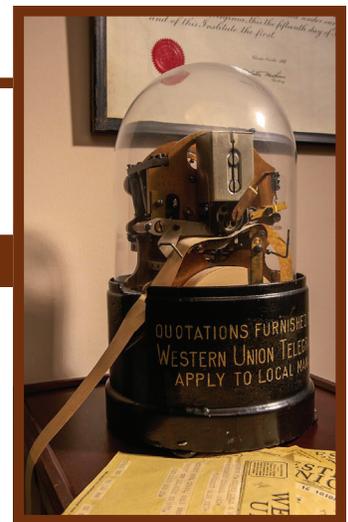
do more than fill out forms regarding your past medical history. You want to see the doctor, discuss the type of lifestyle you want to live, ask questions, and keep the doctor updated if any changes occur in your medical condition. Most people go to the doctor to make sure they are in good health and to help increase their chances of living a healthy life moving forward.

Receiving investment advice is similar to receiving advice from a doctor. There are just some things that a formula cannot predict, or even consider, when looking at your long-term goals. At Investment Counsel, we believe that having conversations and maintaining a trustworthy relationship with your investment advisor remains the best way to meet your future needs.

Gaining Control and Personal Touch

When it comes to your investment decisions, there is usually more than one way to achieve your goals. These different options will each carry different pros and cons that are important to weigh. Because of this, there is rarely a right or wrong answer when deciding the best course of action. Instead, the best decision will be different for each person depending on what you value most.

Investing is a uniquely personal process that should empower you to provide input and retain control. By relying on a Robo-Advisor, you may lose a large amount of decision-



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Established 1929

making power in the investment process. Instead of reducing the investment process to strictly numbers, we believe that large decisions should be a collaboration between you and the advisor. At Investment Counsel, we help explain the benefits and downsides to large financial decisions, and allow you to provide input where needed. This process allows you to retain control and provide a personal touch to your investments.

Guidance Beyond Investment Decisions

Investment decisions are just one part of investing. This sounds a bit counter-intuitive, but we believe it to be absolutely true. There are a lot of dynamics to investing—transferring money to family members, purchasing large items, creating a legacy plan – and each dynamic can involve working with emotions and with multiple family members.

The investment process is best when it incorporates all of these dynamics. By looking only at the numbers and using a formula, Robo-Advisors miss a necessary part of investing—the human element. At Investment Counsel, we believe it is important to work with you on decisions that extend beyond choosing stocks and bonds. This may range from discussing very personal family matters (such as whether it is a good idea to transfer money to loved ones) to advising on different purchases (for example, vacation homes and cars). We believe it is essential, as advisors, to accommodate client concerns, work through emotional situations in an objective manner, and provide a 360-degree service to clients that extend beyond investments.

Conclusion

Successful investing is more than entering numbers into a formula. It is about relationships, conversations, and real connections between people. It is about remaining disciplined when the markets are down and even-keeled when the markets

are up. It is about managing emotions and expectations, making informed decisions that are best for your family, and looking forward to meet a set of goals. And often, is more than just choosing stocks and bonds.

At Investment Counsel, we firmly believe in developing strong relationships with clients and becoming a consultant to you on a number of different issues. We never reduce our client relationships to numbers that are simply entered into a formula. Instead, we seek to collaborate with you on large financial decisions, look forward to your future goals, and provide guidance beyond investment decisions. Under this approach, we believe that you, the client, is served best. ■

INVESTMENT COUNSEL NEWS

Inside the Office



The results of our Client Survey are in and we are honored to report a 5.0/5.0 rating on overall client satisfaction. We appreciate the feedback and remain steadfast in providing the best service to our clients. Clients can expect a more detailed report on the results shortly.

Outside the Office



Scott's dog, Tucker, enjoyed some time in Montague, Michigan this past month!