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Five Secrets to Retirement Success



Even when financially prepared for retirement, many people are unprepared for the psychological and social changes that occur. Here are some tips for retaining a sense of purpose and pleasure in life after work.

1 Make a bucket list

Reflecting on what matters most to you and identifying life experiences that reflect your core values can help give you a sense of purpose and a reason to get up every morning.



Setting your goals high can be a good thing too: A 2011 study by the University of California found people who set themselves ambitious goals tend to be more satisfied than those with lower expectations.

Don't know where to begin? No sweat; the Stanford School of Medicine has prepared a [cheat sheet](#)¹.

2 Accumulate life experiences rather than things



Do you want to be rich or live a rich life?

There is a wealth of research to support the idea that money spent on doing makes people happier for longer, rather than money spent on having. Here's an interesting research paper with an amusing title, just for fun: "[If Money Doesn't Make You Happy Then You Probably Aren't Spending It Right](#)."²

3 Keep your mind fit.

Every brain changes with age and mental function changes along with it. Mental decline is common, and it's one of the most feared consequences of aging. But cognitive impairment is not inevitable. According to the [Harvard School of Medicine](#)³, "brainy activities stimulate new connections between nerve cells and may even help the brain generate new cells".



A wonderful provider of learning opportunities for seniors, is U3A – University of the Third Age, www.u3aonline.org.au/.

Source: Mercer

4 Keep your body fit.



Regular exercise keeps you fit, increases flexibility, boosts your mood and safeguards your long-term health; and all you need do is put one foot in front of the other. Walking is good for you. In its recommendations

for older Australians, the National Ageing Research Institute says daily walking results in a significantly lower risk of dementia⁴ in men.

According to the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)⁵, if all Australians did an extra 15 minutes of brisk walking for at least five days each week it would reduce the burden of disease attributed to physical inactivity by 13%.

5 Have fun.

Our social health is as vital as our physical and mental health. When we join groups, meet new people and share interests we are much less likely to get depressed, and life in retirement becomes something to enjoy, rather than dread. Plus you will slow down the ageing process, feel younger and maintain better health.



Source: Mercer Magazine, www.mercermagazine.com.au, adapted from Eva Bennet's [blog](#).

Eva Bennett is a retirement presenter, trainer, professional speaker and author, with over 25-years' experience in running public speaking and personal development programs.

¹ www.med.stanford.edu/content/dam/sm/letter/documents/Bucket-list-toolkit-Periyakoil-lab.pdf

² If Money Doesn't Make You Happy Then You Probably Aren't Spending It Right, Elizabeth W. Dunn, University of British Columbia, Daniel T. Gilbert, Harvard University, Timothy D Wilson, University of Virginia, www.scholar.harvard.edu/

³ "12 ways to keep your brain young", www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/12-ways-to-keep-your-brain-young

⁴ "National physical activity recommendations for older Australians: discussion document," National Ageing Research Institute, 12 May 2006, www.health.gov.au/internet/publications

⁵ www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/health-pubhlth-strateg-active-evidence.htm

Another Good Year for Investors

Markets and investors enjoyed a good first half of the 2018 calendar year with global and Australian shares posting double-digit returns. The US S&P 500 Index – one of the most common benchmarks for US market performance – reached record highs in January 2018 following the passage of much anticipated personal and corporate tax cuts.

But volatility returned in following months due to fears of steep rate hikes in the United States (US) and the Trump administration's controversial trade tariffs on China as well as close allies; Canada, Mexico and the EU.

European markets were anxious as the British Parliament and EU leaders entered Brexit negotiations and Italy's weak economy and the new coalition Italian government's spending plans created market concerns late in our financial year.

At home, sentiment took a turn for the worse in response to Banking Royal Commission findings of alleged misconduct by major Australian banks.

By the third quarter, a strong market in the US contributed to gains made by global shares. The US Dollar continued to appreciate and solid US economic growth helped allay concerns surrounding the ongoing US/China trade conflict. Amid the tariff introductions in August, US shares had enjoyed the longest bull market in US history.

Australian economic growth data released in September showed positive growth of 3.4% over the year to June 2018. Australian shares posted positive gains overall for the year to 30 September, despite a poor show by financial stocks mid-year, post the Banking Royal Commission.

As expected, the US Federal Reserve raised rates by 0.25% in September to a range of 2.00% to 2.25%, contributing to the stronger US Dollar.

These rate rises and tightening monetary policy was not as good news for more defensive investors. While bond yield rose steadily over the last three months, local and overseas bonds delivered low single-digit returns for the year to 30 September.

Domestically, the Australian Federal Reserve held cash rates at 1.5%, remaining at the same level since August 2016.

Most super fund investors enjoyed their 9th consecutive year of positive returns with both "balanced" and "growth" options averaging healthy returns of around 8-9%.

Superannuation research firm Chant West says Growth options – which it defines as those with 61% to 80% of their investments in growth assets – have delivered a cumulative return of over 130% since the GFC low point back in February 2009.

"Naturally, the financial year performance will get most of the attention but it's always important to look at the latest returns in a longer-term context," senior investment research manager Mano Mohankumar says. "Super fund members have enjoyed a fantastic run with 2008/09 being the last negative year that most experienced."



Portability

You may be able to transfer some or all of your Accumulation Benefit before you cease employment with your employer.

Superannuation law allows you to request that part or all of your Accumulation Benefit be transferred to another fund of your choice.

The trustee must generally comply with your request, however there are certain circumstances in which a transfer request can be refused including the following:

- if the trustee has already complied with a transfer request within the previous 12 months;
- if the fund you nominate refuses to accept the rollover or transfer
- the transfer request relates to any portion of the Defined Benefit component of your benefit in the Scheme.

For further information on transferring your superannuation benefit, including how this will impact on your remaining superannuation entitlements and any withdrawal fees that may apply while still employed contact the Manager.

The trustee recommends that you seek advice from a licensed, or appropriately authorised, financial adviser before making any decisions regarding your super.



New Federal complaints body

Starting 1 July 2018 the Australian Financial Complaints Association (AFCA) replaces three external dispute resolution schemes - the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal (SCT), the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) and the Credit Investment Ombudsman (CIO).

AFCA will be the new single point of contact for consumer complaints with super trustees, banks, brokers, banks, financial advisers, insurers and managed investment schemes.

Super-related complaints continued to be lodged with the SCT up to 31 October 2018. AFCA started accepting new complaints from 1 November 2018. The SCT will continue to operate and resolve back-lodged complaints until 30 June 2020.

What's the process if I have a complaint?

Most queries can be sorted out over the phone, but if we are unable to help you immediately you can make a complaint over the phone or by writing to:

Enquiries and Complaints Officer
SA Metropolitan Fire Service Superannuation Scheme
GPO Box 98
ADELAIDE SA 5001

The Complaints Officer will generally reply to your enquiry as soon as possible. By law your complaint should be resolved within 90 days. Sometimes further time is required for complicated matters. If more time is needed you will be advised.

If you have a complaint and you are not satisfied with the response, or the matter can't be resolved, you may be able to refer the matter to AFCA, which can be contacted at:

- www.afca.org.au
- info@afca.org.au
- 1800 931 678

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