

PERSONAL

BUSINESS TIMES

Vol. 01 / 2020



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 PERSONAL BANC

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Chairman's Message



“

We aim to become a well-renowned and respected financial institution, being cognisant of our customers' wellbeing and fostering strong relationships that bring positive outcomes in our local community.

”

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Personal Banc's finance and lifestyle magazine, the PERSONAL Business Times. Officially launched during our company annual dinner on 17 January 2020, we aim to publish this annually from here on out.

When we came up with the idea of putting together this magazine, we wanted to help stay connected with you and to keep you abreast on Personal Banc's latest happenings within. It is our hope that you will find the PERSONAL Business Times to be informational, entertaining, and above all, inspirational. We have specially crafted the various sections — namely, PERSONALwealth, PERSONALhealth, and PERSONALholiday — to give you some ideas on how to stay healthy financially, physically, and mentally.

As an innovative, forward-thinking and pragmatic company ready to take on the established investments and personal loans market, we aim to become a well-renowned and respected financial institution, being cognisant of our customers' wellbeing and fostering strong relationships that bring positive outcomes in our local community. The magazine is just one of the ways in which we intend to achieve our objectives.

Personal Banc is entering a new phase of development that emphasises service delivery that goes beyond the expectations

of our stakeholders. We plan to position ourselves as a springboard for our clients' growth, combining a broad set of skills and experience by bringing together the best people, and we remain committed to see this through in 2020 and the coming years.

Operating as we do in the personal financial solutions market, Personal Banc is already in the business of touching our clients' lives and helping to make their dreams come true by providing easier access to personal investments and loans. Beyond that, we recognise our corporate responsibility role in the communities where we operate, and we strive to be good corporate citizens.

For instance, we collaborated with HOPE Worldwide Malaysia, a non-governmental organisation, and successfully reached out to more than 120 underprivileged families living in the Sentul area by providing financial sponsorship for their food and basic necessities. Our staff also contributed their time and effort by volunteering to take part in the food packing and distribution activity on 11 January 2020.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on providing sound personal financial solutions to our investors and customers, whether you are already with us or this is your first time engaging with us. You can be assured that we are always working with your best interests in mind, and we will provide you with our professional services to the best of our abilities. We are confident that the growth strategies planned in 2020 will place us in a positive position to face all challenges for our long-term success, come what may.

Thank you for your trust in Personal Banc. I look forward to your continued support as we forge ahead to greater heights in 2020. Happy reading!

YBhg Datuk Murugan Supparamaniam
Chairman of Personal Banc

About Us

Personal Banc is an innovative, forward-thinking and pragmatic company ready to take on the established investments and personal loans market. We are bold, we understand our customers' needs and wants, and we strive to bring new technology and efficiency to the market.



Our *Mission*

To become a well-renowned and respected financial institution, taking responsibility for our employees' and customers' wellbeing, with strong relationships that bring positive outcomes in our local community.

Our *Vision*

Making personal investments and loans easily accessible, leading our organisation to a position of strength and admiration across the personal financial solutions market.





Our Values

Integrity

We manage our business honestly and ethically. We prioritise our customers' interests, making their goals as ours.

Innovation

We are open to ideas that challenge the conventional views and drive innovation.

Excellence

We constantly strive to redefine the standard of excellence in everything we do.

Collaboration

We collaborate to create rewarding experience to empower and inspire our team. Collaboration is the heart of our business.

Respect

We treat each other with respect and courtesy. We encourage diversity in our workplace and value the contribution of each person.

Accountability

We take the initiative to own our responsibilities and to exceed expectations. We make and keep commitments.



Our Investment Service

At Personal Banc, we believe in transparency and honesty.

- We create investment portfolio guidelines that are transparent and cover a wide range of clients' goals.
- We focus on risk management and a consistent decision-making process.
- Our investment process features both individual accountability and teamwork to pursue superior outcomes for investors.

When you become our investor, you become a part of our business. We will personalise your portfolio but remain objective and efficient so that you can grow your wealth with a peace of mind.

Our Partners

Personal Banc is ready to expand; by having partners, we are able to facilitate our ambitious growth plans and help our business to succeed. We already have a strong partnership with Koperasi Mega Maju Selangor Berhad and are ready to work for our mutual benefits.

Koperasi Mega Maju Selangor Berhad is a well-known, reputable cooperative with many years of experience and has a strong track record of making good outcomes that bring valuable standards to the ever-expanding enterprise.

Our Gesture of Appreciation

As our highest gratitude and appreciation to all our investors for the valuable investment and trust in Personal Banc, we are honoured to offer them a privilege card that comes with complimentary unlimited access* to all Plaza Premium Lounge and Plaza Premium First airport lounges across Malaysia.

It is a perfect way to get away from the hustle and bustle of a busy airport and enjoy comfortable lounge seating, a buffet spread and assortment of beverages, newspapers, televisions, business facilities, and much more at these exclusive lounges.

*Terms & conditions apply.



To top it off, our valued investors will also receive these exclusive gifts as a gesture of our appreciation for their support.

Mega Maju New Generation Run 2019



Jointly organised by Personal Banc and Koperasi Mega Maju Selangor Berhad (KMMBSB), the inaugural Mega Maju New Generation Run 2019 was held on 18 August 2019, starting off at The Square @ Publika Mall in Solaris Dutamas.



The Run, with close to 1,000 participants, was organised to help inculcate a healthful and active lifestyle among Malaysians.

YBhg Datuk Murugan Supparamaniam, the Chairman of Personal Banc and KMMBSB, flagged off the runners at 7.30am alongside our Guest of Honour YBhg Dr. Salmah Ishak, Senior Director at the Cooperative Development Division, Ministry of Entrepreneur Development.

Even though this was the first time the event had been organised, it successfully attracted the interest of many participants who worked hard to make exercising part of their lifestyles, and we were proud that we managed to create a community that took



their health seriously. As we held this in conjunction with Independence Month, as well as the 62nd celebration of Merdeka on 31 August, we have proven that the Malaysian people from different races who took part in this Run were united through the medium of sport, and carried out this healthy activity together.



We also took this great opportunity to launch our Personal Banc Touch 'n Go card in support of the government's initiative to promote greater economic efficiency through e-payments.



A simple yet meaningful mock cheque handover ceremony took place during the event, which saw Datuk Murugan hand over the mock cheque of RM10,000 to Dr. Murallitharan, Medical Director of National Cancer Society Malaysia, as financial aid in the fight against cancer.



The winners of both the male and female categories of this 5-kilometre run brought home a cash prize of RM1,000 as well as a medal. In addition, the participants were also eligible to enter the Lucky Draw, featuring exclusive prizes such as Apple technology products, a GoPro Hero 7, and a FitBit wristband. The lucky grand prize winner rode away on the TCR Advanced 2 KOM road racer from Giant Bicycles.

Personal Banc 2020 Annual Dinner

It was a neon evening on 17 January 2020 for Personal People as we came together for our annual dinner at the Le Méridien Hotel Kuala Lumpur. Themed “Neon Colours”, the venue featured the use of neon decorations, with our People donning neon outfits and even creatively using neon glow sticks as fashion accessories.



During the dinner, the inaugural PERSONAL Business Times, Personal Banc's annual finance and lifestyle magazine, was launched by YBhg Datuk Muragan Supparamaniam, the Chairman of Personal Banc, who unveiled the mock-up of the magazine cover and penned his signature on it.



The annual dinner is one of the ways in which the Company seeks to draw Personal People closer together and to recognise and reward our People who have demonstrated their capabilities and Company Core Values in the past year. In particular, Tamil Selvam Kandasamy, Ammutha Thyazaraj, Robina Christine Annathoray, Kavitha Nagaraja, and Shankar S. Pannier Chelvam were recognised with the Excellence Award, Accountability Award, Integrity Award, Top Performer Award, and HR's Choice Award respectively.

Several team events were organised throughout the night to help our People become more familiar with each other and promote teamwork, including fun games and a "Core Value Game".

A briefing session was conducted prior to the start of the Core Value Game to refresh the memory of our People on the definition and examples of our six Core Values, namely Integrity, Innovation, Excellence, Collaboration, Respect and Accountability. Six groups were then formed to represent each of the values, with each group choosing a set of props and demonstrating what best symbolised the group's assigned Core Value.

Other awards and prizes were handed out during the night itself, including the Best Dressed Male & Female, the Best Personality Award, and the Most Creative Group for the Core Value Game.



Thrive In Style, Dress for Success

“Staff should dress in a way that makes them feel great, is respectful to clients and colleagues, and safe and appropriate for the environment they are in.”

- PWC Australia

Making a business pitch?

No doubt, what we present mainly determines if we stand out. However, our presentation is not the first thing that our counterparts see. Deeply rooted first impressions are formed from [how we present ourselves](#).

We at Personal Banc passionately believe that our success comes from wearing our competencies, our confidence and the best outfit for the occasion!

Multiple studies have shown that dressing well increases our performance and self-confidence, and heightens others' impressions of us. Hence, we care, and we invest a whole lot in building our People's confidence through their outlook. All our People are provided with a custom-made Corporate Coat, plus we recently introduced a Business Casual Dress Code in the office.

The purpose of this not too formal and not too casual dress code is to give room to our People to decide for themselves what office-appropriate clothing is, with the focus on versatility and creativity in styling. It merely provides recommendations and empowers our People to decide the image that they want to portray for themselves and for the Company.

Comfortable = Productive

Empowering our People to exercise their own judgement to take charge of their image and subsequently of the Company's prompted them to dress for comfort when at their desks all day, while donning a more formal outfit for business meetings.

Allowing Personal People to be comfortable in their own shoes and outfits takes their mind off the discomfort of formal clothing so focus is completely on the task at hand. Work is better and service is tops. Although this is just one social experiment, larger studies have found that up to 61% of employees are more productive when the dress code is more relaxed.

Freedom of Expression

Research also tells us that what we wear affects how we think. Encouraging versatility and creativity in styling affects our thinking style, be it in our personal lives or workplace. It helps eliminate uniformity in thinking and promotes individuality.

Freedom of Expression given to our People to display their own judgement in dressing boosts our People's morale by fostering a workplace culture which embraces the diversity and creativity each of our People bring.

The habit formed in instilling creativity in outfit choices, over time not only becomes a lifestyle in deciding what to wear, but also becomes a habit of bringing creativity to their daily duties.

Business Casual Dress Code gives our People the freedom to let their personality shine, while still keeping professional elements involved.

Work-Life Balance

As a caring employer, we care about our People as well as their personal and social lives. Introducing Business Casual Dress Code also comes with the hope that it can contribute to providing Work-Life Balance to our People.

Less formal, more relaxed clothing and choices available for styling gives room for effectiveness in cost and time. It reduces lots of time spent on getting ready for work, plus much of the casual clothing can be styled for office use.



Personal People who are happy outside of work are more engaged at work. Our People who have an active social life are the top contributors in the workplace. Business Casual Dress Code sets our socialites' minds free of the hassle of having to change after work for their social activities. A simple outerwear can transform them from office appropriate to social mode.

We are determined to give our People the freedom to choose what is appropriate. Their comfort and safety are utmost important to us. The boost in morale, creativity and confidence which entails from this empowerment is the cherry on top of the cake.

We are all set to Thrive In Style and to Dress for Success.

A Learning *Organisation*



Being able to establish ourselves as a Market Leader, our biggest learning comes from reflecting on our own experiences.

This practice paved the way to the initiation of our primary goal this New Year 2020 which is Continuous Improvement by developing A Learning Organisation. Creating Shared Values, Leading by Example and fostering Strength-based Change which promotes A Learning Organisation is our top priority this year.

01

Shared Values

02

Leading by Example

03

Strength-based
Change Management
through Collaboration

01 Shared Values

You cannot have A Learning Organisation without a Shared Vision.
A Shared Vision provides a compass to keep learning on course when
stress develops.

- Peter Senge -



Our Core Values support our Vision and Mission. They shape our culture as well as our identity. At the same time, they educate and align our People with the desired behaviour in the organisation.

We re-emphasised our Core Values to Personal People during the Company Annual Dinner on 17 January 2020. It came with a Core Value game to demonstrate how our People can contribute to achieving the Company's Vision and Mission simply by adapting the Company Core Values. We also initiated Rewards and Recognitions to Personal People who stood out in demonstrating the Company Core Values throughout 2019.

Leading by Example 02

You cannot force commitment, what you can do... you nudge a little here, inspire a little there, and provide a Role Model. Your primary influence is the environment you create.

- Peter Senge -



Inspiration transforms a person from apathy to possibility, and it transcends a feeling that the person is capable of more than the person thought he or she can do. Research shows that Inspiration can be activated, guided and aligned with the organisational goals and values.

In view to create Inspiration, Mentors are identified among High Potentials in the organisation. The main role of these Mentors is to Lead by Example by organising Knowledge Sharing sessions in their areas of expertise. Besides that, they will also be the go-to person for any functional, leadership or career advice. These Mentors will then create more Mentors by identifying and encouraging Personal People to host their own sharing sessions which will benefit both the Company and our People's professional and personal lives.

Strength-based Change Management through Collaboration

Collaboration is vital to sustain what we call profound or really deep Change, because without it, organisations are just overwhelmed by the forces of the status quo.

- Peter Senge -

We leverage on Strength-based Change through Collaboration. A Task Force is formed comprising of a representative from each department. This Task Force comes together to identify the Strength of the organisation and its People and brainstorm ideas to build on that Strength.

The main duties of this Task Force are to carry out post-mortems after an event or project has taken place, engage very actively with our People to gauge where our Strength lies, and implement the Action Plans.

The prime strategy used is Appreciative Inquiry. It is one of the key positive organisational approaches to development and collective learning. We ask positive questions to unfold our Strength and possibilities:



We foresee there will be Change resistance. However, we are determined to instil the importance of Continuous Improvement through learning at all levels of the organisation and to get buy-in from all our People. We will communicate to our People that opportunities to learn are all around us. We will help them be more aware of the learning opportunities available by providing the right environment and leadership as well as by empowering them.

Alone we can do so little; Together we can do so much

- Helen Keller -



In the business world, the financial bottom line and shareholders' return on investment have long been the main drivers for companies in measuring their success. However, it is equally important for an organisation to operate in a way that demonstrates social responsibility. Michelle Obama once said, "Success isn't about how much money you make; it's about the difference you make in people's lives."





At Personal Banc, we truly believe that we are at our best when we combine our business strengths with our desire to do good to the communities where we operate. Accordingly, corporate social responsibility is something that we take to heart.

We kickstarted 2020 in a noble way, where we collaborated with HOPE Worldwide Malaysia and successfully reached out to more than 120 underprivileged families living in the Sentul area by providing financial sponsorship for their food and basic necessities. Our staff also contributed their time and effort to pack and distribute the sponsored food and groceries to the underprivileged on 11 January 2020. It was indeed heartwarming to see big smiles on the faces of the beneficiaries when they received the goods. It was also a great experience for our staff volunteers, who came together, worked together and had fun together for a noble cause.



About HOPE Worldwide Malaysia

HOPE Worldwide Malaysia is an international, non-profit, non-governmental and non-religious charity organisation that changes by harnessing the compassion and commitment of dedicated staff and volunteers to deliver sustainable, high-impact, community-based service to the poor and needy. Its services mainly focus on Health, Food, Children's Education and Volunteerism Programmes.

Types of Money Personalities – *Which One Are You?*





Money is fundamental to our lives; while it cannot guarantee longevity and happiness, money can certainly go a long way towards providing us with security, comfort, and quality of life. Our attitudes and approach towards the way we think about and handle money say a lot about the type(s) of personalities we have.

Types of Money Personalities – Which One Are You?

There are some common personality types when it comes to the issue of money, and each one has its own characteristics and strengths, as well as weaknesses. If you tried to look up all the various types of money personalities, you will likely find that every source has different ideas; however, there are a few that remain consistent. Below are a few such money personalities, and what you should do if you fall under one of them.



The Saver

Also known as the hoarder, the saver primarily values money for the financial security that it provides and wants to spend as little of it as possible. Savers typically will have multiple savings accounts, emergency funds, lots of money in EPF and PRS. They also love to eat at home because it's cheaper than eating out, use coupons whenever possible, and always keep their eyes out for the best deals — but only on items that they truly need (like groceries and household necessities). If they use credit cards, they will make sure they pay them in full every month to avoid incurring interest and/or finance charges, and the only type of debt they're likely to take on will be necessary ones, such as mortgages or car loans. Savers are satisfied when they see the size of their savings grow.

Advice for Savers

Savers tend to be very conservative with how they save or invest their money, because they are sensitive towards downside risk. They also tend to have very simple and frugal lifestyles, because for savers, money is to be saved, not spent. These traits mean that savers lose out on potentially more rewarding investments, as well as on the finer things in life. If you are a saver, you should take stock of your financial situation. Realistically speaking, any extra money you have beyond what is needed to comfortably fund your retirement and one or two unforeseen emergencies is just that: extra. You can use this extra money to live life a little more freely and enjoy the occasional luxury. Or, you could use it to invest in something that is potentially more risky but also has the possibility of generating higher returns.



The Spender

For people with this type of money personality, money is no object to getting what they want. Whether it is eating at the fanciest restaurants, or getting the latest fashions, or using the newest tech toys around, the sky is the limit. They don't want to keep up with the Joneses, they are the Joneses. Spenders are likely to have little to no savings beyond the mandatory EPF, maxed-out credit cards, and will have no problems making impulse purchases, regardless of the expense. Spenders don't necessarily spend only on themselves, either; many spenders love to buy gifts for the people they care about. Spenders are satisfied when they manage to buy the latest and greatest.

Advice for Spenders

As one might imagine, spenders typically live on the edge and are poorly prepared for retirement, if at all. Their propensity to enjoy the finer things in life means that they may be living pay cheque to pay cheque, so to speak. The phrase 'balanced budget' means nothing to them. If you are a spender, you have the opposite problems of a saver. You should really look into your financial position, and start seeing how you can cut down on your spending habits. Setting limits on how much you are allowed to spend is the first step. Paying down your debts is another good step to take, as is setting aside a reasonable proportion of money every month in a retirement savings account of some sort.

While we've discussed 3 major types of money personalities here, depending on who you ask, there could be 4, or 6, or even 9 different money personalities. For example, some people split spenders into money worshippers and money status worshippers. Others have another category called investors, who are financially savvy and want to put their money to work, even if it means taking on some risk. Regardless of the categorisation system, however, the intent is to make you aware of your attitudes towards money, which drives the way you behave towards it. By doing so, you can better understand how your money habits could be getting you into trouble, and create a plan to help you use your money more wisely.

The Avoider

Both spenders and savers at least see money as desirable, either to use or to keep. In other words, money can help them solve problems. Avoiders, on the other hand, don't even want to think about money. For some avoiders, perhaps money itself is seen as an evil, while for others, the notion of money — much less handling it — makes them worried and anxious. Or maybe it's just too troublesome to keep track of it all. They themselves might not even know whether they spend more or save more — or if they spend or save anything! Even paying bills can be a chore best put off until the last minute. Avoiders are satisfied if they don't have to worry about money or managing their finances.

Advice for Avoiders

Avoiders typically can be quite financially illiterate. Money does not have a hold on them, nor any attractiveness — in fact, quite the opposite. At the same time, they very often have no idea what to do with whatever amount of money they do have. If you are an avoider, you should start by adjusting your mental attitude towards money. Consider that money in and of itself is not necessarily bad, or troublesome, or a hassle to deal with. Getting yourself financially educated is a good place to start so that you can see how useful money can be. You can also set up auto-debit and standing instructions, so that at least your bills are paid on time.

6 Steps

To Retiring Smart



After several decades in the workforce (or, as some might put it, in the ‘rat race’), you might be looking forward to your retirement as a time to get away from the pressures of your workplace, to travel around the country or around the world, to spend time with your family, or to have more free time to spend on your hobbies — maybe pick up a few new ones. Whichever reason(s) you might have, however, retirement marks the end of one stage of your life and the beginning of a new one, so it’s always a good idea to plan ahead for this change and to prepare for it in advance.

So what should you look out for? Here are some guidelines and factors to consider when planning your retirement.



Step 1

Buy medical and travel insurance

Most full-time employees are covered by employer-paid health/medical plans. However, unless you are very lucky, that coverage ends with your retirement. Further, healthcare costs per capita have increased by 2.5 times over a period of 17 years from 1997 to 2014. As you age, those costs are only going to increase, and paying more for your medical needs is unavoidable. The same is true of travel insurance; whether you plan to travel within the country or internationally, travel insurance is a necessity to ensure that should the unexpected occur while you're away from home, at least you still have that peace of mind. The earlier you start purchasing medical and/or travel insurance plans, the less the amount of premium you have to pay, and the longer the length of time you are covered.

Step 2

Take stock of your financial position

A comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of your current financial position (assets, liabilities, income and expenditure) is foundational for all the other things that you should do when planning out your retirement. Whether it is creating a household budget or updating your will, knowing what you own, what you owe, how much you earn, and how much you spend will allow you to be more confident that you are on the right track. It is also generally a good idea to have a consolidated view of your finances, so that you don't have to remember everything or spend time hunting all the details down when you need them.



6 Steps To Retiring Smart



Step 3

Set up a retirement savings plan (and emergency fund)

Depending on how much you have already saved up or invested, as well as how much you think you will draw down to maintain your standard of living, you may wish to supplement your retirement funds with additional savings. Certainly, pensions and EPF are not enough. Approximately 70% of EPF members who withdraw funds from age 55 use EPF funds up within a decade — possibly within 2 years, even. As for government pensions, the government spent RM23.87 billion in 2018, which is expected to increase by approximately RM3 billion in 2019.

So how much is enough, and into what kind of savings or investments? That depends on your individual circumstances. EPF requires a Basic Savings amount of

RM240,000 by age 55 in order to have a monthly payout of RM1,000 over 20 years. However, according to its own Belanjawanku expenditure guide, an elderly couple living in the Klang Valley requires RM3,090 monthly — or 50% more than EPF's Basic Savings requirement, assuming both spouses are EPF members. If you are unsure, consult a financial advisor or wealth manager; EPF, for instance, has a Retirement Advisory Service that is free of charge.

In any case, you should also consider setting up an emergency fund. This is a mostly liquid fund set aside for use during emergencies, such as losing your job or an urgent medical event, which can cover your expenses for 6–12 months. Think of it as your own mini-insurance policy.



Step 4

Pay off outstanding liabilities

When you retire, you no longer have a steady income from your full-time job. This means that servicing loans and other forms of debt will likely eat into your capital. Thus, you should endeavour to enter retirement debt-free where possible. This means paying off instalments, credit card balances, car loans, mortgages, and so on. In particular, you should pay off liabilities that have higher interest rates, such as credit card balances (which often have double-digit APRs). It also means that you should check with the Inland Revenue Board to see whether you have any outstanding tax obligations, and settle those before retirement.

Step 5

Manage your ongoing expenses

Retiring does not necessarily mean that you have to change your lifestyle, but it does mean that you have to monitor more closely how much you spend and what you're spending on. Ongoing expenses, in particular, are expenses that occur on a regular basis, such as utilities, property taxes, insurance premiums, and groceries. If you can cut down on such expenses, you have more to spend on your interests and other incidental expenses. For instance, you might be able to cut down on electricity bills simply by replacing older equipment with more power-efficient ones.



Step 6

Research post-retirement income

There are three different types of income – Active Income, which includes things like full-time employment and freelancing; Passive Income, which includes things like rentals; and Portfolio Income, which are returns from your investments. Even after you retire, which removes your main source of active income, you can still gain income from passive and portfolio sources, so it may be worth your while to do your research into that. And if sitting around at home doing nothing all day doesn't appeal to you, you can always think about earning side income through, for instance, giving private tuition, or becoming a part-time Grab driver.





Why Is Tax Planning Important

As the old saying goes, there are two things you can't avoid — death and taxes. For some people, tax is a simple subject; in fact, if you only earn a salary and you are happy paying the amount deducted for your income tax every month from your salary, you don't even have to file a tax return (the Borang BE). However, if you have multiple streams of income (i.e., not only a monthly salary) or you have other types of taxes to consider, e.g., property taxes, then you want to ensure that your tax obligations are as low as permitted under the law.

This is where tax planning comes in. Through careful tax planning, you can optimise the amount of tax you have to pay by taking advantage of all the appropriate exceptions, exemptions, allowances, and deductions. You can do this yourself, by reading up the appropriate laws, tax codes, and regulations regarding the relevant taxes that apply to you. However, for something as important as this, it is better to use tax professionals, such as tax consultants and tax agents.

Whichever way you choose to decide, here are some factors to consider when doing your tax planning.

Why Is Tax Planning Important

Income Tax Planning

Certain sources of personal income are tax-exempt. Pensions, for instance, are tax-exempt once you reach the age of 55 or as a result of ill-health. Up to RM20,000 of royalties (e.g., from book publication) are also exempt, as is 50% of rental of residential properties until 2020. If you are a partner in a limited liability partnership, the profit paid, credited, or distributed to you is similarly tax-exempt. Bank interest and/or profit is non-taxable, so also in the case of sukuk, debentures, bonds, and other such financial instruments. Your tax consultant should be able to provide you with more ideas as to how you can better ensure your sources of income are not taxed.

If you are married, one way in which you might be able to reduce your tax obligations is to choose between joint filing vs. separate assessment. Joint filing is better for certain circumstances, such as if one spouse is not working (because you can claim spousal relief), or if one is salaried and the other incurred business losses. Separate assessment is better under other circumstances, such as if both spouses earn high (and roughly similar) incomes, since you cannot claim spousal relief and your combined income may push you into higher tax brackets.

Creating a business, especially if you earn side income, is also a method of optimising your taxes, as there are many legitimate expenses that you can claim if you run a business. This includes capital allowances if

you purchase equipment used in the business, business loan interest repayments, and so on. Further, if you incorporate a company, the corporate tax rates can be better than individual tax rates, depending on how much you earn. The highest individual tax bracket is 28%, while the standard corporate tax rate is 24% (17% on the first RM500,000 for resident SMEs, increasing to RM600,000 from 2020). Meanwhile, the company can provide you with

various benefits-in-kind (or fringe benefits) for which the taxes may be exempted (e.g., dental and child care benefits, group PA insurance, telco charges, and handphones).

If you derive income from elsewhere in the world, understand your double-taxation relief situation. Malaysia does not tax foreign income, and you may be eligible to tax reliefs if you pay taxes on Malaysian income elsewhere in the world.





Property Tax Planning

Capital gains are not taxed in Malaysia for either companies or individuals, except for real estate (the infamous Real Property Gains Tax, or RPGT). This means that any appreciation in value of your shares, mutual funds, or other investments are not taxed, although interest payments (other than from banks, as stated above) may be. You also have income tax exemptions on EPF contributions, insurance premium payments, and payments into Private Retirement Schemes and deferred annuity schemes. All in all, except for real estate, tax planning in terms of property in Malaysia is quite simple.

Now let's talk about RPGT. Individuals and companies alike have to pay RPGT when disposing of a property, except that Malaysian individuals can elect to have RPGT exempted from the sale of a residential property once in their lifetimes. The RPGT rate for individuals is also lower than that of companies (5% as opposed to 10%) from the 6th year onwards, which may have an impact on your tax payable. In addition, individuals have an exemption/relief of RM10,000 or 10% of the chargeable gain, and transfer of property as a gift between husband and wife, parent and child, or grandparent and grandchild are exempt from RPGT, which again, may impact your tax planning.

Estate Tax Planning

Malaysia does not have any inheritance (also known as death or estate) taxes, nor does it levy any net wealth taxes; however, if you have property overseas, those may be subject to the taxation regime of the country or countries in which those properties are located. This means that you have to take those regulations into consideration.

Hopefully, from these factors and examples above, you can see why tax planning can play an important role in ensuring that your tax obligations are minimised, especially in the area of income tax, if you could reduce your income below a specific tax bracket. If you have multiple sources of income and asset types, and especially if you have overseas income and assets, you should seek professional advice from registered tax consultants or agents. Note that many of these tax exemptions and reliefs apply only as long as you are a Malaysian citizen/permanent resident in Malaysia for taxation purposes (i.e., 186 days out of the year, the previous year, or the following year). Note, too, that tax planning for an individual or sole proprietorship is different from tax planning for a company, even a wholly owned company that you control. Finally, note that there are various other forms of tax that have to be considered — SST and stamp duty, for instance — and your tax consultant or agent should advise you on how to best deal with those.

Surprising Health Facts You Need To Know

With regular studies published on health and fitness, it can be difficult to keep up with all of the information out there. Some of the findings repeat health advice that's been around for years, but others are a little more shocking.

Take a look at these fun health facts that might surprise you.

Drinking coffee
can prevent
depression

We hear a lot about the negative effects of caffeine on our health, but it turns out that caffeine has its good points too. A new study led by Harvard School of Public Health researchers found that women who drink four or more cups of coffee per day may reduce their risk of depression by 20 per cent.



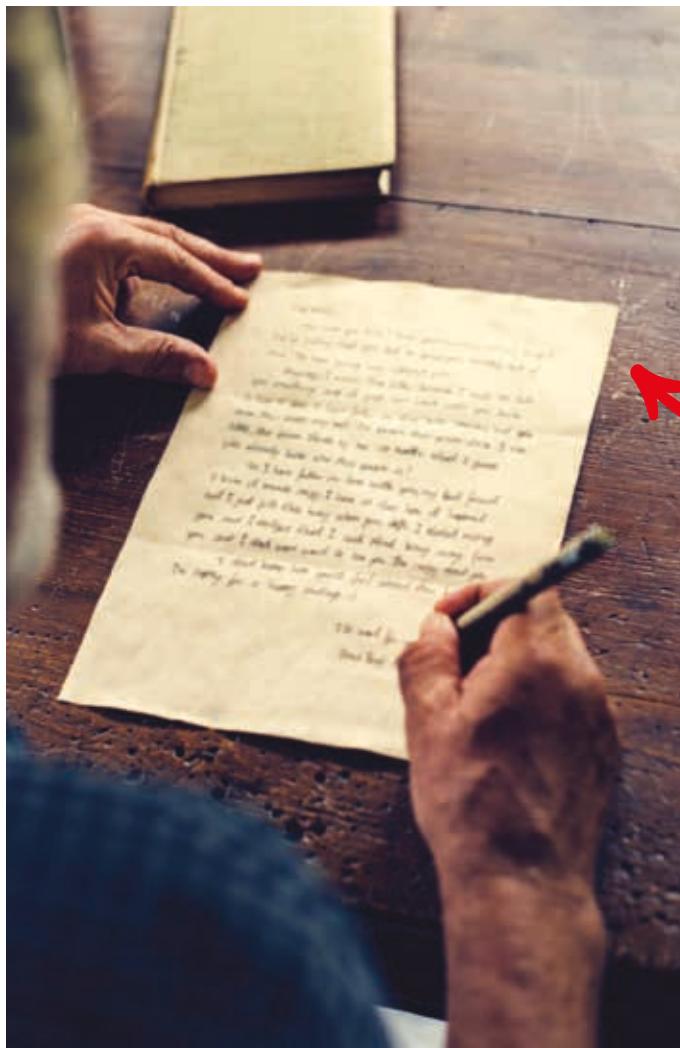
**Chewing gum
helps you stay
alert**

If you're suffering from a mid-afternoon slump or can't seem to concentrate in the morning, then try chewing some gum to make you feel awake. Coventry University researchers found that chewing mint flavoured gum dramatically reduces feelings of tiredness. Another study on the subject found that chewing gum can improve overall test scores and memory by 35 per cent, relieve stress and reduce anxiety levels.



If you are tired... Exercise

After a long day at work, going to the gym is probably the last thing on your list of priorities, but research has found that exercising actually gives you more energy! A study published in Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise found that levels of fatigue and depression improved after a 30-minute session of moderate intensity exercise. This is because exercise improves your cardiovascular health, which means that more blood and oxygen flow around the body, therefore giving you more energy.



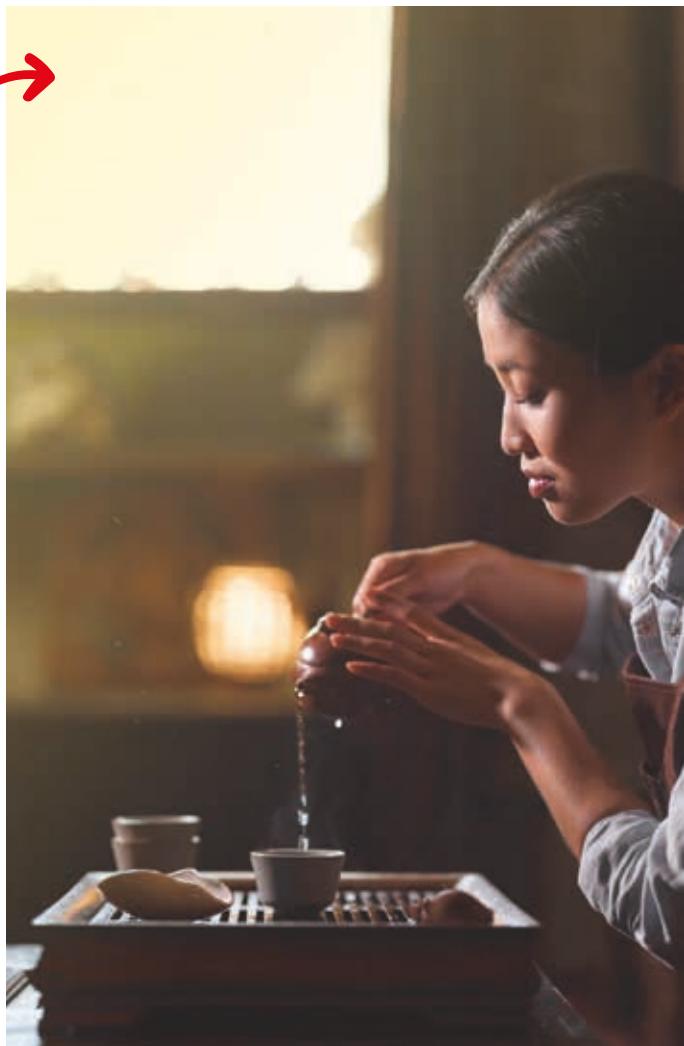
Handwriting things can boost your memory

Research from Indiana University found that in order to remember something, you should handwrite notes, rather than typing them. Writing is thought to boost your memory as note taking by hand requires different cognitive processes than typing. For example, if in a lecture you are writing notes, you have to listen carefully to what the speaker has said as it is impossible to write down every word. Therefore, through this process, you are listening, digesting and summarising the information more effectively than someone who is just typing words into a laptop.

Surprising Health Facts You Need To Know

To cool down, drink something hot

It might sound counterproductive, but if you want to cool down, then drink something hot. According to a study from the University of Ottawa's school of Human Kinetics, as the drink is hotter than your body temperature, it triggers a sweat response in the body that more than compensates for the increase. So, although it might initially make you feel hotter, a hot drink will cause you to sweat more, and therefore, the body effectively cools itself quicker.



Being optimistic helps you live longer

According to a study from Duke University Medical Center, heart patients who are more optimistic about their treatment actually live longer than those who are more pessimistic in their mindsets. Also, according to findings of a study published in the European Heart Journal, people who are optimistic have less chance of suffering from heart disease.



Sitting at a desk can increase death risk by 48 per cent

Office workers beware, as research from the University of Sydney found that office workers who sit for longer than 10 hours a day at their desks had a 48 per cent increase in risk of death in comparison to people who sit for less than four hours a day. To counteract this health risk, try to introduce five minutes of activity every hour and make sure you take regular breaks away from your workstation. Simple steps like taking the stairs instead of the lift will also make a positive change to your health.



ATM machines and public toilets are equally dirty

Withdrawing money from a cash machine is something many of us do regularly, but how many of us give our hands a wash after using them? Cleanliness tests carried out in Britain found that ATM machines are as dirty as the toilets. Specialists investigated swabs taken from the cash machine keyboards and from public toilets nearby, and found both samples had the same bacteria known to lead to sickness.

Are You Leading An Active Lifestyle?

Staying active is one of the most important components of a healthy life. This becomes particularly important as you age. An active lifestyle helps to reduce your risk of conditions like heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

The trick to staying active is to find something you enjoy doing. It doesn't matter whether you're going to the gym, walking around the block, dancing while listening to the news, or taking a short walk after dinner — just get moving.



It can be hard to find your workout style. Here are some simple strategies you can use to get active and stay active.

01

Take it slow

If you haven't been active in several years, start out slow. Always talk to your doctor before starting an exercise programme, as there may be precautions you should take. In general, you'll want to start out with sessions of only 5 or 10 minutes. You can gradually increase the length of your sessions over time.

02

Work your muscles

You don't just need aerobic exercise. Resistance training or weight lifting is also important. This type of exercise helps strengthen your muscles and bones and improve your balance and coordination. This reduces your risk of osteoporosis. It also helps prevent injuries or falls.

03

Stretch

Stretching after a workout should always be part of your routine. Stretching improves flexibility and range of motion. It may also cut your risk of injury or muscle cramps. Finally, stretching improves circulation throughout the body.

04

Get your 30

Your goal for physical activity should be 30 minutes each day. According to the Harvard School of Public Health, three 10-minute sessions are just as good as one longer session. For example, in one day you could do:

- a 10-minute dance before work
- a 10-minute walk around the parking lot at lunch
- a 10-minute walk around the neighbourhood as soon as you get home

Of course, more exercise is fine! However, take precautions to avoid injuries, such as muscle strain. It's better to work out a little less one day if it will help you do it again the next.

05

Free workout

If you're not a gym person, you can also get a great workout from the comfort of your own home. And it's absolutely free! Workout videos of all different types are available on the internet, especially on YouTube, for people of all different levels of fitness. Check out different types of exercise and find the one that you like.

Other home-friendly workouts that require little or no special equipment include:

- walking or jogging
- jumping rope
- dancing
- squats
- weight training with found objects (bags of beans, a heavy book, a water bottle)
- jumping jacks
- push-ups

Healthy Recipes

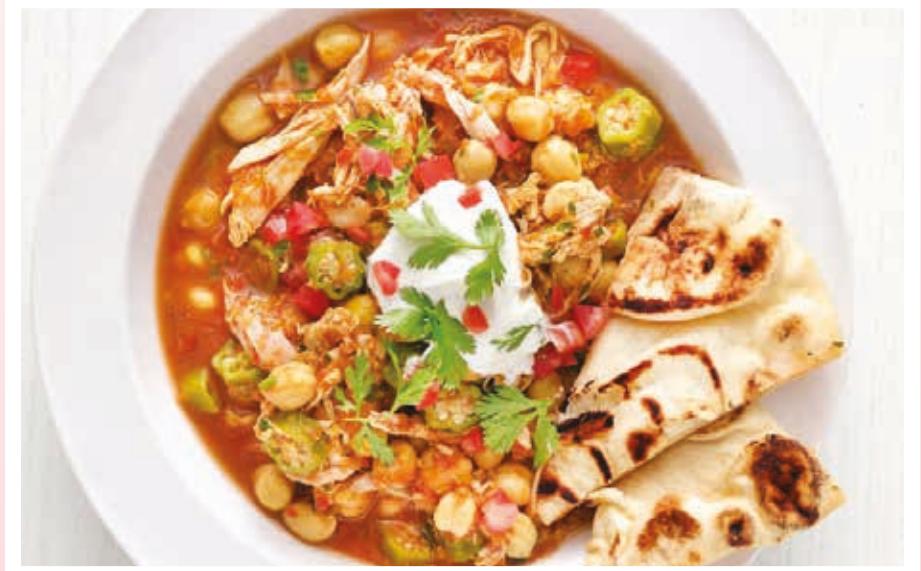
Healthy eating is not about strict limitations, staying unrealistically thin, or depriving yourself of the food you love. Rather, it's about eating smart and enjoying your food. Try out these easy-to-make and delicious-to-eat recipes that will surely satisfy your taste buds and boost your mood!

Chicken-Chickpea Curry

Preparation: 15 minutes
Cook: 25 minutes
Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 4 plum tomatoes, chopped
- 2 large onions, halved
- 1 2-inch piece ginger, peeled
- 1/2 to 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- Kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken (skin removed)
- 2 cups frozen cut ladies' fingers or sliced fresh ladies' fingers
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh coriander, plus more for topping
- Plain yogurt and naan bread, for serving (optional)



Directions

1. Pulse 3 chopped tomatoes, the onions, ginger, jalapeno, curry powder and 1 teaspoon salt in a food processor until smooth. Heat the vegetable oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the tomato mixture and cook, stirring often, until darkened and paste-like, 10 to 12 minutes (add water as needed if the mixture is sticking).
2. Add 2 1/2 cups water to the pot and bring to a simmer. Add the chickpeas and cook, stirring often, until the sauce thickens slightly, 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Stir in the chicken, ladies' fingers and coriander. Cook, stirring gently, until the ladies' fingers are crisp-tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Divide among bowls and top with yogurt, more coriander and the remaining chopped tomato. Serve with naan.

Lemon-Garlic Shrimp and Grits

Preparation: 15 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup instant grits
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 500 grams medium shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails intact
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)
- Juice of 1/2 lemon, plus wedges for serving
- 2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh parsley



Directions

1. Bring 3 cups of water to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat, covered. Uncover and slowly whisk in the grits, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Reduce the heat to medium low and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the Parmesan and 1 tablespoon butter. Remove from the heat and season with salt and pepper. Cover to keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, season the shrimp with salt and pepper. Melt the remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the shrimp, garlic and cayenne, if using, and cook, tossing, until the shrimp are pink, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and add 2 tablespoons water, the lemon juice and parsley; stir to coat the shrimp with the sauce and season with salt and pepper.
3. Divide the grits among shallow bowls and top with the shrimp and sauce. Serve with lemon wedges.

Escape The Crowds!

With locations like Krabi and Boracay increasingly drawing in the tourist dollars, it's hard to find a secluded location for a vacation nowadays. Most popular destinations are overcrowded with people, and nobody wants to jostle for space on a crowded beach — there are far better things to spend your vacation time on.

These are locations littered throughout South-East Asia with untapped travel potential. From white, sandy beaches to towering volcanoes, there's something on this list for all those looking to escape the crowds.

Togian Islands Indonesia

While the Maldives might still be a top destination for travellers everywhere, there's a hidden group of islands in Indonesia that brings you the tropical experience without burning a hole in your pocket. Enter the Togian Islands!



The Togian Islands offer you an opportunity to live the life of a castaway, away from the distractions of the modern world. Seclusion isn't the only perk that the Togian Islands provide. Ever wanted to swim with jellyfish? Well, in the Togian Islands, there lies a freshwater lake filled with jellyfish. The amazing thing about this? These jellyfish don't sting at all!

The waters around Togian are filled with a rich, wide array of marine life and make for an ideal spot for snorkelling or scuba diving. Other things to do include taking a day trip to Una Una Island to hike up a still-active volcano, and paying a visit to the indigenous Bajau people, commonly known as sea gypsies.





Phu Quoc Vietnam

Are you looking for a beach experience similar to that offered in Phuket, but without the touts and crowds? Look no further than Phu Quoc, voted “The Cleanest and Most Beautiful Beach in The World” by ABC News in February 2008. With such acclaim thrust upon its shores, it’s no wonder that Phu Quoc is steadily rising on many travellers’ must-visit lists.

Apart from its beaches, Phu Quoc offers night squid fishing tours, which give you an opportunity to catch your own sotong for dinner! Don’t worry if you don’t manage to catch anything though — the crew will prepare squid congee for you.

Regular snorkelling and fishing tours are available as well. For travellers not into fishing, Phu Quoc has waterfalls nearby Duong Dong Town, fishing villages open for visiting, as well as night markets to get your grub on. Be sure to catch the sunset from Pho Bo cafe, overlooking the lighthouse and the local shrine!

Koh Rong Island Cambodia

The second largest island of Cambodia, Koh Rong, also known as Monkey Island, is a relatively new settlement, only being established as a tourist destination in 2008.

While Koh Rong looks like any other island at first glance, this jewel of an island is unlike most other South-East Asian offerings. There are barely any roads in Koh Rong, and the only ways to get around are by foot or boats.

There are marked walking trails throughout the island, but most of the island is made up of jungle. However, if you can get over the lack of transport, Koh Rong offers over 43 kilometres of untouched beaches of varying lengths and colouration.

The main attraction on the island is the High Point Adventure Park, an adventure course featuring suspension bridges and walking wires, which takes you up to the highest points of Koh Rong. For everyone else with a fear of heights, take a walk down the beaches at night, and you’ll be greeted with the amazing view of phosphorescent plankton. With minimal development and light pollution, Koh Rong has the ideal conditions to take in this dazzling spectacle.



Escape The Crowds!

Kelimutu

Indonesia

Imagine three lakes side by side, all coloured differently. Sounds too good to be true? Well, this is in fact, reality. Kelimutu is a volcano in the island of Flores in Indonesia, featuring three crater lakes of varying colours. Unlike other colour-changing lakes, the lakes in Kelimutu are unpredictable in their colour variations.

The volcanoes, although breathtaking, aren't the only spectacles in Kelimutu. Natural hot springs can be found near the Kelimutu National Park entrance, and the nearby waterfall is a popular picnic spot among local youth.



Siquijor

Philippines

Hands up if you've always wanted to experience fireflies around you in the flesh. Many of us have never seen these elusive creatures, yet in Siquijor, they sparkle brightly every night, covering the island in an eerie glow, giving it the name 'Isla del Fuego', which translates to 'Island of Fire'.



Siquijor is home to many natural formations, like Cambugahay Falls, an impressive three-tiered waterfall; Cantabon Cave, a massive cave that requires one and a half hours to trek through; and Balete Tree, an old tree revered by locals. The coastline of Siquijor consists of sandy white beaches, which is as good a location as any to get your tan on!

Sapa

Vietnam

Famous for its rugged scenery and cultural diversity, Sapa, or Sa Pa, is a frontier town in northwest Vietnam, lying in the Hoang Lien Son mountain range near the Chinese border. Host to many hill tribes, Sapa is an ideal location for trekking, with various mountain and rice terrace ranges for tourists to scale.



There are plenty of activities available for recreation in Sapa. Take a day or two to climb Fansipan, the highest peak in Vietnam, or experience a homestay with the locals. Solo biking is another popular tourist activity there, giving you the freedom to explore Sapa at your own pace.

Do note that the weather in Sapa is unpredictable, so check the weather reports before planning your trip. For travellers looking for a more relaxing experience, pay a visit to the many spas in Sapa or take up a traditional Hmong sewing class by the locals.



Rai Leh

Thailand

Many of us have experienced rock climbing in artificial conditions, but all our experiences pale in comparison to natural rock climbing. If you're up for an adrenaline-pumping experience, look no further than Rai Leh! With over seven hundred routes up the majestic limestone faces, Rai Leh draws tourists in from all countries with the promise of a hard climb and a breathtaking view at the end of it.

With a reputation as one of the premier rock climbing locations in the world, most visitors to this island come with climbing in mind. However, there's plenty of other things to do in Rai Leh as well! Pay a visit to the Sleeping Indian cliffs, named after its uncanny resemblance to an actual sleeping Native American, or take a walk to Phra Nang cave, a cave with formations that glitter like diamonds.



Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park

Indonesia

Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park, located in East Java, is home to the two iconic Indonesian volcanoes from which the park derives its name. Mount Bromo, the more famous of the two, is easily recognised by the constant billowing of white smoke from its caldera. Mount Semeru, the highest peak in Java, is one of Indonesia's most active volcanoes, with minor eruptions every 20 minutes.

The main attractions in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park are, of course, the trekking trails up the volcanoes, but there are plenty of other sights to see while you're there. Take a walk across Laut Pasir, a sea of fine volcanic sand located at the base of Bromo, and visit Poten while you're there, a Tenggerese Hindu temple.

Other attractions include Madakaripura Waterfall, a stunning waterfall where Indonesian national icon Gajah Mada was said to have meditated, and Lakes Ranupani and Ranu Regalo, two misty lakes at the base of Semeru.

Source: <https://thesmartlocal.com/read/obscure-getaways-sea>



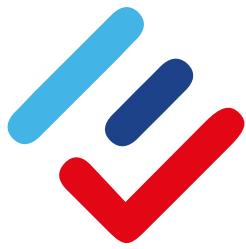


Never depend on single income.
Make investment to create a second source.

– Warren Buffett



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