
How Much Is Enough?

◆ Issue #6 ◆ Douglas E. Reese

Wealth Direction and Perception

The American Heritage Dictionary defines PERCEPTION as “the ability to achieve understanding of.” It has been the focus of my writings, to this point, to offer you an avenue by which you could construct a scenario of your financial situation and begin to clarify your Wealth position. I will submit that a **Wealth Position** consists of your current understanding of previous experiences, your current thinking as to future aspirations, and your current level of awareness of your financial situation as it exists today. Hopefully the past four issues of INSIGHTS have provided the opportunity for you to achieve such an understanding of your Wealth position (i.e. a perception of where you are today and how you arrived at this point).

It is my hope that the next few issues of INSIGHTS provide you with the opportunity to develop an understanding of your **Wealth Direction** (i.e. a perception of where you are headed).

I define PERCEPTION in the context of a WEALTH DIRECTION as “the ability to achieve understanding of what you truly want to accomplish through your financially-directed efforts.”

In order to achieve this level of understanding (i.e. perception) it is necessary that you clarify and incorporate into your thinking, where you stand on the issues of priorities, commitment, discipline, balance and expectations. Initially then, it may seem as though the task of formulating this PERCEPTION OF WEALTH DIRECTION, and the time, energy and thought required may be more than you are willing to “give.” Therefore, with this awareness of what might be necessary in order to direct your financial efforts most productively, the question becomes “What truly am I willing to give?” and this question cannot be answered completely without asking the question, “What truly am I willing to give up?”

We will begin to look at each issue involved in the development of PERCEPTION as it pertains to Wealth Direction. And we will begin with a question you may need to ask yourself for the first time. And when you have answered the question, to the best of your knowledge, then we will begin to ask questions that require more thought, more openness with yourself, and ultimately a repetition of self-examination until the vague becomes clear and the fantasy gains a credible basis for becoming reality. After all, isn't that what we're searching for? Not a “quick-fix” or a “slam dunk” but a basis for long-term prosperity and financial independence.

Because this is not an easy-answer, one-time task, but rather a complex, long-term building process, you must be the one to ask yourself “can I afford to do this?” and you may then want to ask “can I afford not to?” It is not a question of dollars. It becomes a question of commitment.

Process I:**Review of Action Step #1**

Go back and review Process I from the September, 1988 issue of INSIGHTS. This was a brainstorming exercise that allowed you to write down the goals and dreams you have for the future which will require a financial commitment. (If you did not complete Action Step #1 it will be necessary to complete before continuing.) Reread the goals and dreams you wrote down from this brainstorming session. (Again I will suggest that at this point you not limit your thinking to specific time frames, dollar amounts, or even your “realistic” sense of achievement to date. If it is a goal or dream, do not stifle any opportunity to achieve it in the future by denying its importance to you—today. That’s what planning is all about—narrowing the gap between perceived fantasy and attainable reality.

Process II:**Priority Ranking by Importance**

As you review your list of goals and dreams, ask yourself “Which of these would I most like to achieve?” and “Which of these goals and dreams are most important to me?” Go through and number your top 5 priorities. Record your choices on the lines below.

PRIORITIES:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

“There is a new breeze blowing, and each day a new page in a chapter of the book of our lives. And with each new breeze, a page is turned, and the story continues.”

President George Bush (Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 1989)