

# MANAGING YOUR MONEY \$

## Budget Your Way To Success

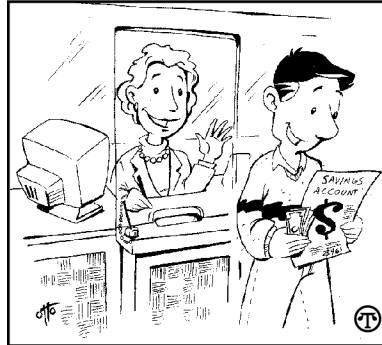
(NAPS)—It may pay, experts say, to allocate time for setting up a budget. Budgeting will help you make decisions about what, where and how you spend your money—which may help you save some of it. Establishing and sticking to a budget can be very rewarding, if you plan carefully and set clear goals.

Here are a few hints on how:

**Develop a Game Plan.** Before you begin setting up a budget, determine why you need one. For instance, are you not managing your money efficiently? Are you saving for a rainy day or for next year's vacation? Your ability to clearly define your goals will help you stick to the budget.

**Pay Yourself First.** Make sure your budget includes a payment to yourself of about ten percent of your income as savings. Paying yourself first is not a free pass to neglect your other financial obligations and responsibilities.

**Establish a Savings Account.** Set up an automatic deduction with your employer, if you can, that gets deposited directly to your savings account or ask your bank to set up a similar deduction from your checking account to a savings account. Set aside an amount small enough to allow you to meet your other financial obligations, but large enough that you can see your account balance grow and motivate you to continue saving.



**YOUR BUDGET AND YOUR BANK.** Together they can help you help yourself to more money.

**Manage Your Money.** There are many products and services available at your community bank to help you track your finances. For example, debit cards can be great for eliminating the need to carry cash and they provide a detailed record of your purchases. Because debit card transactions are deducted directly from your checking account, you avoid paying interest as you would with a credit card. What's more, most online banking services offer money management software that lets you record transactions, balance your checkbook and pay bills.

Your bank can help you reach your financial goals. To find a nearby community bank, visit [www.icba.org](http://www.icba.org) or call, toll-free, 1-888-500-5538.