

MONEY MATTERS



Finding The Upside Of A Downturn

by John Addison

(NAPSA)—Sticking with a few sound financial principles can help you weather even the worst economic storm.

Stay Focused

The best way to ride out the ups and downs of the stock market is to maximize the power of dollar-cost averaging—investing a certain fixed amount consistently, regardless of market fluctuations. True, the technique doesn't guarantee a profit or protect against loss. However, history shows that you'll make up for 80 per-



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cent of your bear market loss within the first year of recovery, according to Money magazine.

Cut Costs

Shop around for auto and homeowner's insurance. Money reports that some insurers give long-time customers up to a 10 percent discount, but that can pale in comparison to what you might save by switching companies. It's a good idea to get a quote from a different insurer at least once every two years.

Credit Counts

To keep your all-important credit score strong, pay your bills on time, limit the number of credit cards you have and avoid financing big-ticket items at once. If you

can't keep up with your bills, you may be better off consolidating high-interest, revolving debt into a single fixed-rate loan. Doing so could lower your monthly payment and set a date for debt freedom.

Prepare For Emergencies

Financial experts recommend having an emergency fund of at least three to six months' income set aside. You can go from scratch to feeling flush by opening a separate savings account or money market fund as a "designate" for your emergency cash. Make automatic deposits into the accounts. Also, once you've finished paying off a big debt or credit card, keep making payments—into your fund.

Boost Income

Adding on a second or third job is a great way to get through a crunch. Or start your own business on the side—as long as it has low start-up costs.

Learn More

Financial professionals at Primerica have created a guide that shows you how to take control of your financial life. To get a copy of "How Money Works," write to Primerica, 3120 Breckinridge Blvd., Duluth, GA 30099, ATTN: Corporate Relations, or call (770) 564-6329.

For more information, visit www.primerica.com.

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