

What's Your End Game?



I often get the deer in headlight stare when I ask that question.

My father was a taskmaster my whole life...to the point of annoyance as a young person. The main lessons I have gleaned from his "get r done" attitude, do not give me excuses, personally if you are going to pursue a task; always begin with the end in mind and work backwards to completion. The other primary lesson, do the work once...meaning do not do it half way by over doing the short cuts. It may feel good to check off a task but how frustrating is it to go back and do it again? He would always preach, son, you got to be smarter than what you are working with...meaning use your brain muscles before engaging the back muscles. My father was poor in formal education but rich in common sensewhich I have observed is not that common.

I believe beginning with the end in mind is vital in any type of planning and absolutely essential to financial and retirement planning. I think we should start any project by observing the 11th commandment "thou shall not fake thyself out". Think about how much time we spend in the pursuit of money? You are working a plan - did you plan your work? As a retirement planner and wealth strategist it is paramount that I help my client's define their end game. This process is fairly simple in action but hard for folks to imagine at first...sometimes we need a paradigm shift.

Let me give you an example of planning for the end game. My teenage daughter mentioned wanting a new bicycle for this summers fun. She made a very persuasive case for a new bike, safety, faster, new

advancements in construction, etcetera. I asked "What's your end game?" She said "A new bike"..."ok" I said "but honey that's not my end game, you got a bike. If you really want a new bike I will help you work up a plan. How much does the bike cost? \$200 Ok, when do you want to buy it? Now...be realistic sweetheart, ok, end of July, 8 weeks out." Got it - 8 weeks... \$200, that's \$25 a week or \$5 a day.

"What are you doing to earn money this summer and how much do you plan to earn per week?" She was so excited to express between mowing two lawns a week and baby sitting for some neighbors she will earn \$50 barring the unexpected per week. "Great, how much do you plan to live on?" "What do you mean?" "Spending money for fairs, movies and summer activities?" "Oh, well, I guess I can save \$25 a week first and then only spend what's left". My chest puffed as I thought the apple does not fall far from the tree, she gets it!

Begin with the end in mind. ■

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