



ELA Financial Group, Inc.

Est. 1984

TIMELY TIPS

A Newsletter by Ela Financial Group, Inc.

December, 2017

Watch the Trends, and Don't Get Taken By Surprise!

As 2017 winds down, it's time to review the year's trends and consider what we have to look forward to in 2018. Over the past year, we have seen positive market earnings have driven investments up resulting in an increase of consumer confidence.

However, we also saw the impact of uncertainty in the market as the Republican and Democrat reactions to the "do-or-die" tax reform plans came into play. This exemplified that the market takes a hit when confidence takes a nosedive. However, tax reform will never be simple or easy, and this reaction was quite predictable, even though the dropping market may have been perceived as a "surprise" by some.

With 2018 almost upon us, we can expect to see job growth slowing and consumer confidence hitting its peak. It is probable that the economy will slow and the Fed will raise interest rates, which will lower corporate earnings growth, and thus, business confidence. Again, this is a predictable pattern. But it will most likely hit the markets as a "surprise."

The upswing of the economy may level off as we venture into 2018 after a year of positive trends. We will see more changes in the landscape, and 2018 may very well be more challenging than 2017 has been.

Moving in to 2018, be aware that confidence (and the markets) will rise and fall depending upon political trends, international policy, or simply the business news of the day. A well-planned portfolio can be your source of confidence and help you avoid any unwelcome surprises!



***"We make a living by what we get...but
we make a life by what we give"***
—Winston Churchill

Our thanks to our clients, community and staff who helped collect over 100 toys for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Drive in December. The annual collection distributes toys as Christmas gifts to the less fortunate children in our area.



Avoid Year-End Mistakes

Almost time to open a new calendar! Below are a few tips to help you be ready for the New Year.

- ✓ Review your YTD spending – Look for leaks in your budget, especially monthly subscriptions that are on auto-renewal. If you don't use it, cancel it.
- ✓ Limit Holiday Spending – Create a budget and stick with it—remember, by March, most people can't remember what they've received for Christmas!
- ✓ Make your 529 Contribution – Get ahead of those future college expenses now!
- ✓ Make your Charitable Contributions – Donate by December 31 to take the deduction this calendar year.
- ✓ Sell Your Losers to Offset the Winners – If you have had a good year investment-wise, consider selling off the investments that have not done well, and you could save on your tax bill.
- ✓ Consider a Rebalance of Your Investments – Post-recession gains could have created disproportion in your portfolio. Make sure you have an appropriate balance.
- ✓ Make a Gift – You and your spouse can gift \$14,000 per person each calendar year for a tax deduction.
- ✓ Pay Your January Estimated Taxes Early – Pay before December 31 and take the deduction for the 2017 tax year.
- ✓ Don't Wait Until the Last Minute – Delaying key decisions on year-end planning can cost you. The holiday season tends to slow down business at many financial banks and institutions, and they may not be able to accommodate a last-minute change.
- ✓ Schedule Your Annual Check Up – Set aside focused time each year to review your plans and portfolios with your Advisor to keep stocks and bonds balanced and avoid risk.



Ela Financial Group is SmartVestor Pro certified by Dave Ramsey of Ramsey Solutions. Dave is the creator of Financial Peace University (FPU), a program that helps people dump their debt and get control of their money.

SmartVestor Pro Advisors are recommended and vetted by Ramsey as possessing a “client first” mentality with a focus on eliminating debt and investing over the long term. No account is too small! Check it all out at [Smartvestor](https://www.smartvestor.com).

Check Out Our New Technologies... Click the Links to Learn More!

Everplan - A complete E-Vault of all your important financial, legal, and medical files kept secure and encrypted with industry-leading security technology. Store wills, passwords, funeral wishes, and more in your vault so it's easier for your loved ones to carry out your wishes. All clients receive a complimentary subscription. [Everplans](#)

Riskalyze - Provides portfolio analysis specifically for its level of volatility (risk) through a Risk Number™ that is easy to understand. We can calculate your road to success, uncover outside assets and communicate the bigger picture. Riskalyze was named one of the world's ten most innovative companies in finance. [Riskalyze](#)

Asset Map - Provides a consolidated overview of your current financial state all on one page. [Asset Map](#)

*Thank you for sharing another year with us...wishing you all Happy Holidays and a healthy and successful New Year!
--From the Staff at Ela Financial*

