

Your Financial Plan: Is Something Missing?

YOU MAY THINK THAT ONLY THE WEALTHY HAVE financial plans. The truth is, everyone should have one. Many people also make the mistake of confusing a single financial product, such as a 401(k), with a comprehensive financial plan. "A piece of a plan is better than none, but it takes all of the pieces to make sure it's a viable plan," says Michael Padon, president and founder of The Longmont Group, insurance advisors in Houston, Texas.

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Life insurance helps ensure that a personal tragedy doesn't become a financial tragedy by covering both short-term and long-term expenses. "It protects the earning power of the individual," Padon says. "It pays the mortgage, buys the groceries, pays the college tuition for the kids." If you have people relying on your income, like a spouse or kids, life insurance is obligatory.

Disability insurance, on the other hand, provides replacement income for you and your family if you become sick or injured and are unable to work. This is especially important because if you've been hurt, you may find yourself facing unforeseen medical and rehabilitation expenses.

All this begs these questions: How much insurance do you need, and where should you turn for help?

The best way to determine your insurance needs is to consult an expert, a licensed professional. Be sure to inquire about their experience, their clients and the types of plans they prepare. Ask your friends and relatives for referrals.

"The most important thing," Padon says, "is to have confidence and trust in the person you're working with." After all, your financial plan—and your family's future—are at stake.

For more information, visit LIFE's Web site at www.life-line.org or call 888-LIFE-777 for a free *Consumer's Guide to Insurance*.



A licensed professional can help you determine your insurance needs.

Developing that plan requires a balance. On one side of the scale are investments—stocks, bonds, retirement accounts, and so on. On the other side, you need life and disability insurance to protect yourself and your loved ones if you die suddenly or can't work because of illness or injury. Though insurance is often an overlooked part of a



"Although insurance is often an overlooked part of a personal portfolio, no financial plan is complete without it."