



# Getting Control Over Your Money

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

## Published

November 23rd, 2008

There is an old adage that states "Money makes the world go 'round" but sometimes it just keeps you at home.

Problems with money can not only interfere with your credit rating but also jeopardize your relationships.

We live in a very commercialized environment where everyone not only seems to want to "keep up with the Jones'" but also pass them.

If you are having money problems, the first step to correcting this is to keep an accurate accounting of your income and all your expenses. Begin with a ledger and write down every single thing that you spend in a month. You will then be able to determine the areas in which you are able to "cut back".

Some items are fixed and cannot be changed such as mortgages, taxes and loan payments. On the other hand, credit card companies will often agree to lower an interest rate if you are prepared to make a telephone call to ask for this.

Most people find that small amounts of money "disappear" from their accounts and it is not always easy to identify where they go. By writing things down you will be able to recognize the fact that your daily coffee and donut are costing over one hundred dollars a month!

There are several different methods for managing your personal finances. Most banks and credit unions offer counselling and advise without charge. In fact, they are happy to help you with getting control over your situation. Your library and the Internet also have numerous resources to assist you.

Also, it is important to ensure that your credit score and rating are satisfactory. In Canada, Equifax and TransUnion are organizations that gather and provide information about your financial situation. You can request a report without charge by contacting them. Often there are errors that need to be corrected.

Your credit report is very important as it reflects the history of your financial dealings. If you have missed or been late with your payments, your report will reflect this for seven years and influence future opportunities for borrowing.

Many financial planners promote formulas to help individuals and family to designate their funds. The general rule is 10-10-10-70. Save 10%. Give 10%. Invest 10% and spend 70%

If you do this you will not only experience financial success but also develop a healthy pride in your ability to look after yourself and your family! It's never too late to begin!