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Beyond Financial Planning:

6 Keys to a Successful and Happy Retirement!

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Retirement is a major life change that can trigger many emotions, from excitement to uncertainty. But there's a lot of happiness to expect with a little preparation!

We know getting your financial house in order is the top priority when planning for retirement. Tasks such as budgeting expenses and a thorough review of current and future assets are important considerations before



launching into the joys of retirement. But there are other key strategies to consider beyond financial planning to make the most of this next chapter in life.

Reflect on these six suggestions as you anticipate your successful and happy retirement.

1. Celebrate Your Successes!

Wow, you have come a long way from your first paying job to your current professional flying career. It is worthwhile to take a moment to reflect on all your achievements! What initiatives did you take to promote better regulations in the industry? What milestones did you achieve as you moved up in your great career? What stressors did you persevere through? Think of all those you mentored—even indirectly—and how you shared the mass of expertise from your years of experience. List what you have been grateful for in

your career journey. Also, list your core strengths, including those that could contribute to new ventures!

2. Brainstorm Your Ideal “Bid Sheet”

This can be the most thrilling part of planning for retirement! Brainstorm all the new directions and routes and stop overs you can take. What do you want to do with your unregulated time? Simply get a piece of paper and start listing *everything* that comes to mind. Don't analyze or prioritize just yet. But acknowledge all the ideas,

wishes, and possibilities that come with you owning your own time! Your ideas can cover many aspect of life—from health and freedom, family and friendships, hobbies and tasks, to giving from your surplus and even working part time, volunteering, or starting a side business. Talk with your family about how they envision your new activities and approaches as a couple or family.

3. Enjoy the “Layover”

Relax. Take a deep breath. Lounge around and do nothing for a while. You don't have to

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figure it all out right now. Enjoy the pause and the power of taking breaks. Retirement is an ongoing adventure. And you're the boss! The captain of your choices. The last emotion you want is one of anxiety or pressure to have every detail listed in stone. Know you can change your mind, adjust your route, and even cancel a trip.

Remember to live in the moment. Take intentional fly arounds. You pick when the pick-up is. While there is still much responsibility in retirement living, there is also much freedom in arriving and thriving in these well-deserved years. Congratulations!

4. *Have a Focused "Approach"*

Review your bid sheet. What jumps out? What are you most excited about to get started? Pick one or two desired life destinations, activities, or actions to begin a focused approach. What have you most been looking forward to? Crew Scheduling won't be calling, so what are you going to enjoy first as you enter retirement? Get excited about your plan in progress.

Keep in mind how mental activity, spiritual, or intellectual interests will help keep you active and less likely to suffer from loneliness, boredom, or depression. Talk to other aviation retirees about what successes—and perhaps challenges—they encountered. What are a few ideas to get

started? What is a first step you can take right now?

5. *Get "Fueled" for Take Off*

Just because you're not attached to a fulltime job, doesn't mean you won't be active! Staying fueled up means you're engaged, active, and ready to take off! One idea is to choose a cause you are passionate about and participate in it. Lead an initiative in something you want to see changed.

Your skills will always be of value. Aviation-related ideas to stay involved could include:

- Join or contribute to the local Civil Air Patrol, Women in Aviation, the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals, or other group.
- Become a certified ground or flight instructor.
- Join the Gray Falcons, the retired FedEx Pilot group.
- Volunteer with charitable groups such as Pilots N Paws, Angel Flight, or a local aviation museum.

Some ideas not aviation-related could include:

- Design your ideal workshop.
- Join an investment club.
- Become a master gardener.
- Hike and bike the local trails.
- Take a trip of a lifetime—and no standby!
- Take an in-person or online class on just about anything!

6. *"Seniority" Matters*

Realize aging is a gift! Aging is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. You have earned your seniority! Research shows how we are

living longer, but age has no bearing on what you can accomplish if you have the desire. If you can dream it, you can do it.

As we age, we have the chance to make sure every day counts and that we can live the life we want. The sum of a lifetime of days lived well is more valuable than any other thing in the world. It is also a gift you can give the people around you.

Nourish your connections with family and with friends. Talk to your neighbors. Seek new routes to meet new people. Your wisdom and your seniority have high value. Don't get stuck in auto-pilot. Keep learning and keep living. As you age, become more of what you always were.

For additional information or to share your ideas for our next newsletter, contact:

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