



## MEASURING UP: COURSE-CORRECTING YOUR FINANCIAL PROGRESS

**You've set your measurable goals for the year, but what comes next? While establishing goals is a vital first step, it's what you do next that truly matters. Assessing your financial progress is essential for staying motivated and on track towards achieving those goals. Let's explore how to evaluate your progress and keep your financial journey moving forward.**

A benefit of measuring your financial progress is that it boosts your motivation and accountability. If you can see your progress, you fuel your enthusiasm and commitment levels. On the other hand, lack of progress becomes a wake-up call to change your approach.

These three tools will help you to measure your financial health and monitor your progress:

### 1. BUILD A BUDGET

A budget is like your financial GPS, showing you where your hard-earned rands are going, and where you may need to make changes. Measure your income compared to your monthly expenses. This will help you assess if you're living within your means and whether you need to modify your spending or find ways to boost your income. Apps are a great way to have oversight of where your money is going.

22Seven is a free budgeting and investing app from Old Mutual that helps you budget, track your spending, and invest in your life goals. Do some research on the money-management apps available and find something that works for you.

### 2. ACCESS YOUR CREDIT REPORT

Just like you wouldn't buy a car without checking under the bonnet, check your credit report. It shows your creditworthiness to lenders, impacting your ability to access loans, credit cards, and more. You can access a free report once a year from a credit bureau like Compuscan or Experian. Look for inaccuracies or negative listings like missed payments and dispute any errors immediately.

Take time to understand your score. A good score (generally above 600) means lower interest rates and better loan terms. Improve your score by paying your loans on time and reducing your debt. It helps to minimise the number of enquiries (applications for credit facilities) and make payment arrangements where necessary.

Calculate your debt-to-income ratio by adding up all your debt repayments as a percentage of your total income. If you aren't managing to cover your expenses, you may need to



For confidential assistance on financial matters, contact your  
**EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME**  
SMS your name to 31581

explore a solution that suits your specific needs.

Our financial coaching programme offers you five different debt solutions to choose from.

### 3. MONITOR YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

Are you saving for retirement? Take some time to calculate how many years you have left until you plan to retire. Are you on track to meet these goals? Equally important, do you have a safety net in place to handle unexpected emergencies? Consider the benefit of a tax-free savings account, which can provide valuable tax advantages.

We track and measure progress in many elements of our lives by, for example, seeking guidance from a dietician for weight management and/or a fitness expert for training. Your financial coach and an independent financial advisor can also help you measure your financial health and recommend changes to get you on track to financial fitness.

**If you're finding it challenging to stay on course with your financial goals, seeking guidance from a financial coach\* can be transformative.**

Take Sue\*\*, for example, who used to find herself anxiously counting down to payday each month, struggling to cover her expenses. In a session with her financial coach, she tallied up how much money she was spending on takeaways

and luxury items in the first 10 days after getting paid. Now that she has changed this habit, she's finding she still has money in her bank account by the 20th of each month. Another client, John\*\*, wanted to try and pay more into his bond every month so that he could retire without having the burden of a bond repayment. With the help of his coach, he was able to measure what interest he could save and what amount he needed to pay to settle his bond in the next 24 months.

*The information is shared on condition that readers will make their own determination, including seeking advice from a professional. E&OE.*



**For confidential assistance on financial matters, contact your  
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME  
SMS your name to 31581**