

BUSINESS

5-point checklist helps avoid bad investments

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Over the next several weeks, you will be seeing a variety of newspaper and magazine articles touting "the next greatest investments" for your portfolio.

While some of the investments mentioned may sound tempting, you may need to take a step back and use a more objective process to determine if that investment would fit your portfolio.

Here's a simple five-point checklist you can use to evaluate a particular investment's merit for your particular needs.

1.) Does this investment meet your specific objectives? Investments that pay regular interest or a relatively secure dividend are considered "income" investments.

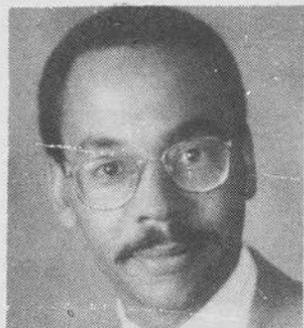
A "growth" investment, on the other hand, is one from which you hope to benefit from the increasing value of the investment, also known as capital appreciation. If the investment you are considering does not coincide with the specific objectives of your portfolio, you may want to find another choice.

2.) What are the risks of the investment? Generally, the more return potential an investment has, the greater risk you must assume. So, you should know your "suitability" ahead of time to establish which investments will fall within your risk boundaries.

"Conservative" investors prefer a relatively lower amount of risk to try to preserve what they've already accumulated. "Aggressive" investors usually take on more risk to increase

Financial Report

By Fred T. Snyder



their portfolio's growth potential. And "speculative" investors are clearly the biggest risk-takers, willing to risk a much larger loss in exchange for the possibility of making a much larger profit.

3.) Does this investment offer the tax advantages you are looking for? While tax considerations should not dominate your investment decisions, you should include taxes in the investment equation since not all investment returns are subject to the same taxation.

For instance, tax-advantaged investments such as municipal bonds offer federally tax-free interest although they may still be

subject to the alternative minimum tax.

Stocks offer tax deferral on their price growth as long as you hold onto them (though you still have to pay taxes on your dividends), and others such as annuities and certain life insurance policies provide tax-deferred growth so that you can postpone taxation altogether until you withdraw funds.

4.) How "liquid" is this particular investment? Investments should be judged by your need for liquidity and how easily you can convert the investment into cash on short notice without making a substantial price concession. For some investors, this may not matter, but for those who do not have vast financial resources, a liquid investment may be a necessity.

5.) Is it a "long term" or "short term" investment? Like the question of liquidity, knowing the time frame of an investment can and should influence your decision.

Some investors want to see results in six to 12 months, while others seek long-term appreciation and are comfortable riding out market fluctuations over the long haul.

Before you jump on the "hot investment" bandwagon, make sure you have the facts you need now for an investment you want to help you in the future. After all, just because the media say it's a good investment doesn't mean it's a good investment for you.

This article was provided by A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., member SIPC, Fred T. Snyder/investment broker.

Real Estate Perspective

By Loretta Arrington

Probe leasing, sharing, purchasing options

Special to Sentinel-Voice

It is important to weigh all your options when making this decision. Not every business owner will need to commit to long-term lease. There are many options. Have you thought about the possibility of sharing office space? Shared office space might provide a better alternative and at the same time cut your cost in half.

Shared office space or "shared co-op" is a concept spreading all over the country. In this arrangement, business owners share office space with a business or several other businesses. Amenities in this arrangement include a central receptionist, conference room, fax machine and copier.

The co-op arrangement is best for business owners in transition between spaces or ones desirous of cutting their start-up cost.

Purchasing your own facility is an option; though expensive and sometimes unrealistic. Buying a facility to house your business is more complicated than sharing or leasing space. Thus, you should carefully select a commercial real estate broker or agent who specializes in this area. Your commercial broker or agent will help you select the lending source right for you.

Depending on the lending institution you select, you may need to put down as much as

20 percent to 25 percent of the facility's purchase price. This will vary from lender to lender. The Small Business Administration (SBA) and certified development companies (CDC's) are excellent lending sources.

Dealing with commercial real estate, whether you rent, share or buy, is a complex process and one that you should not handle alone. Remember, think before you leap!

Please contact a professional for all your real estate needs or write to me c/o Real Estate Perspective, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice Newspaper, 900 E. Charleston, Las Vegas, NV 89104.

Loretta Arrington, owner/broker, Arrington & Associates Realty Company.

Million Man March has lasting economic impact

By John William Templeton
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Anyone who plans to host one million wedding couples should be expected to give an appropriate wedding gift.

Minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, and the organizers of the Million Man March will have brought at least an additional \$27 billion into the African-American community by the time of the planned million families event in 1999.

That's the tally from just one of the three major consequences of the Million Man March. Valuing the march properly is very important because there is an extensive effort to erase its impact.

However, they did make a big impact.

Passage of the first increase in the minimum wage rate in eight years was a direct spinoff from the march.

That means between \$9 billion and \$20 billion per year for the six million African-American workers in or at the minimum wage.

Most of these workers are part-timers, but many actually work a full week without the

benefits of full-time.

The lower figure reflects the impact at 20 hours per week; the higher figure at 40 hours per week.

The most evident result of the march was the continuing drop in violent crime. According to the FBI, murders were down 22 percent last year

nationally.

This drop in violent crime stems from one million men and their friends embracing the call for finding better ways to resolve disputes, both among themselves and with the opposite sex.

The message of atonement went out like a tidal wave,

impacting everything from church attendance and newspaper subscriptions to youth mentorship.

Like the minimum wage, fewer murders also have economic consequences: Longer work lives and greater accumulation of wealth; more

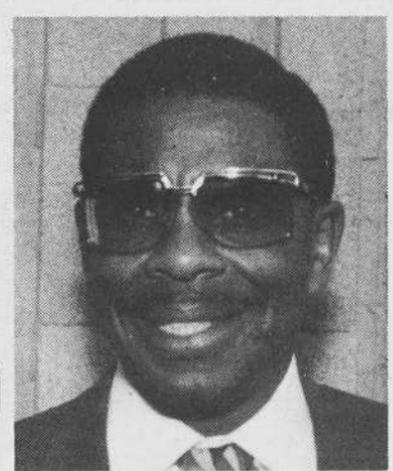
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