



HOW TO MAKE YOUR BUDGET STICK

Do you suck at sticking to your budget? Adrian has some tips for you.

Just like Pilates works on your core physical strength, budgeting is the core to good financial health. After all the more that you can save, the better off you will be in the future.

Whilst most people seem to understand the concept of a budget – where you list all your expenses for the year against your income – for whatever reason they invariably don't work. Here are a few things to try.

Discipline

The secret to a good budget is DISCIPLINE. I have seen some tremendous looking budgets – with fancy graphs and tables – but unless you follow through then they are just rubbish.

Dangle that carrot

It is hard to save if you don't have a goal to save for. Before you prepare a budget, write down a list of goals that you want to achieve. Now close your eyes and visualize that new house or new car. The more you dream, the more it is likely to become reality.

Use an excel template

If you don't know how to put a budget together, Microsoft Excel has some great templates for you to use for creating a budget.

Arrange direct debits

If there is no money in your bank account then you are least likely to spend it. Don't tempt yourself. Arrange payments to come out of your account the day after you get paid. Create separate savings accounts for things like holidays, Christmas and education.

Be realistic

If you put in figures into your budget that you know you will never achieve then why put them there in the first place?

Pay bills monthly

Do you get stuck with those bills such as phone, insurance and rates that arrive quarterly or annually? I find it a lot easier to pay a regular amount each month. Then you won't have to find a lump sum and throw your budget out.

Credit card burial

Only spend that you earn. If you want to be serious about saving then put the devil to rest and cut that card up now. Get rid of it ... forever!

Stop impulse buying

Impulse buying stuffs up budgets. You see a fabulous pair of shoes and you are in THAT zone where you want them no matter what. Sound familiar? Get out of THAT trance by putting a note in your purse "Don't you want a house? Put it back and walk away."

Balance your life too!

Extreme dieting is bad just as extreme saving can be too. The goal of a budget shouldn't be to save as much money as possible and suck the life out of your lifestyle. Make sure that you have some balance in your spending otherwise you will go insane.

Happy saving!