First and Foremost: Saving for Retirement

Investors should make saving for their future retirement a priority.

If you're like most people, you have a very long to-do list. All the things you have to do to meet the needs of your family, job, and community are probably toward the top. But where on the list is your need to save for the future? If it's close to the bottom, chances are you aren't doing enough to plan for retirement.

Think of Your Future

You may have a lot of expenses now, but you'll also have expenses once you stop working. Without a regular paycheck, how will you pay your bills? Social Security benefits may be helpful, but you're going to need more than just Social Security to live comfortably after you retire. You're also going to need retirement savings. The more you're able to save now, the more you may have to live on during retirement.

It's Easy to Save

Your employer's retirement plan makes it convenient to save for retirement. The amount you decide to contribute to the plan is taken out of your paycheck and automatically deposited into your plan account for you. Instead of spending the money on something else, you're saving it for your future.

Put Your Money to Work

When you save in your employer's retirement plan, you can make your paycheck contributions before taxes are taken out. You pay no income tax on your pretax contributions -- or on your investment earnings -- until you withdraw money from the plan.[1] This tax deferral can help your retirement savings grow by allowing you to keep all your contributions and earnings invested.

1. Source/Disclaimer: Some retirement plans also offer a Roth contribution option. Unlike pretax contributions, Roth contributions do not offer immediate tax savings. However, qualified Roth distributions are not subject to federal income taxes when all requirements are met.

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It's Worth the Effort

If money is tight, cut back on spending rather than your retirement savings. Look closely at your budget and track your current spending to see where you could easily make a few changes. For example, you may want to eat more meals at home, find a less expensive cable or cell phone provider, or put off big-ticket purchases and vacations. Doing without some things now will be well worth the effort if it means you won't have to do without during retirement.

See How Small Savings Can Grow

Over time, regular contributions to your retirement savings plan can add up significantly.

Isn't it time you put your future first and make saving for retirement a financial priority?

Weekly Contribution Amount	Potential Value After 20 Years	Potential Value After 30 Years	Potential Value After 40 Years
$15	$30,033	$65,293	$129,447
$20	$40,044	$87,058	$172,596
$25	$50,054	$108,822	$215,745

This is a hypothetical example used for illustrative purposes only. It is not representative of any particular investment. It assumes a 6% average annual total return compounded monthly. Your investment results will be different. Tax-deferred amounts accumulated in the plan are taxable on withdrawal unless they represent qualified Roth distributions. Source: DST Systems, Inc.