

FIVE SIMPLE STEPS TO BOOST YOUR FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE

Women are more involved than ever in financial decisions affecting their families. Today, they are taking the leading role in money matters for their households. But according to a new survey, while overall women tend to have clear financial priorities, many are experiencing a confidence gap.

Although eight in 10 women polled for Prudential Financial's "Financial Experience and Behaviors Among Women," survey believe maintaining their lifestyle in retirement is a priority, only 18 percent are confident they can achieve it.



The survey also found that feeling prepared to make financial decisions does not necessarily come with age.

"We're not sure exactly why such a wide gap exists, but suspect it has a lot to do with the fact that women tend to push long-term financial planning to the back burner because they are overwhelmed by short-term priorities, such as caring for children or aging parents, working outside the home and community commitments," says Judy Rice, president of Prudential Investments.

Rice adds that one of the best moves women can make, no matter what life stage they're in, is to become familiar with basic financial planning. Not sure where to start? Here's some good advice from the Web site: www.Prudential.com/women:

1. Know Where You Stand and Where You Want to Go. Next, make a list of areas of interest that you'd like to learn more about, such as annuities, stocks and bonds, insurance and IRAs.
2. Meet With a Financial Planner. What you don't know can hurt you, so seek out a professional.
3. Insure Your Future Security. Carefully review your life and disability insurance needs, especially if you are the primary breadwinner. Life insurance can help protect a family from the devastating loss of a wage earner. Be sure to ask your financial planner if long-term care insurance is right for you.
4. Max Out Your 401(k). You've heard this advice before. If you have yet to heed it, start now. It really is one of the easiest, smartest things you can do to help prepare for retirement.
5. Make a Will or Estate Plan. A will leaves no doubt about what should be done in the event of death and helps protect your assets for future generations.

"Our study indicates that only one in five women feel very well prepared to make wise financial decisions. Taking action now can place you in the financially-confident minority and help put you on the road to retirement security," says Rice.

For more tips on how to reach your financial goals, log on to www.prudential.com/women.