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4 Ways to Get More Involved in Your Investments



To be the best at anything, you have to work at it. There aren't a lot of things in life that are offered for free. If they are, there's likely a gimmick or an element of instant gratification tied to them, as opposed to something that is earned through hard work, drive, and passion.

If you want to be the best at anything, including investing, you have to ask yourself this question: Do you want to be the person accepting advice, unsure of yourself or why you're accepting it, or the person who's involved, confident in using it, and even dishing it out? If it's the latter, which I suspect, then you have to realize that hard work and dedication are the way to go.

Think of it this way: If you want to get into shape, what do you have to do? You have to work out. If you want to get an elite education or specialize in a certain line of work, what do you have to do? You have to study hard. Investing is no different. It takes hard work, a touch of passion, and a big heart to be successful.

When I look back at my 13-plus years of investing and personal finance experience, I am filled with a sense of accomplishment. Don't get me wrong, I understand that I have to continue to be disciplined and work at it, but I am extremely proud of the knowledge and skills I have acquired and *earned* over the past 13 years. In fact, so passionate that I feel a sense of obligation to give back: To teach all facets of investing, while challenging myself to learn more each and every day.

So, what sort of things can you do to become more involved in your investments and demonstrate that you have the dedication to become a more successful investor? Well, quite a few come to mind, but here are four ideas to get you started:

Check in on the markets daily.

Spend at least 15 minutes each day to see if the markets were up or down, and why. Keeping an eye on domestic indices such as The S&P 500 and the Nasdaq 100 as well as, overseas indices like the Japanese Nikkei, Chinese Hang Seng, and European FTSE 100, to name a few, will keep you up-to-date on the global financial scene. Be sure to inquire on the reasons for the market action as well: Were there specific economic reports released, was the market simply continuing its trend, or maybe it was just taking a healthy break from the trend? Repetition and experience will allow you to better understand what's really happening and not buy into the media headlines.

Make time each week to learn something specific.

Carve out an hour or two each week to learn about something specifically related to investing. For example, maybe you want to start with fundamental analysis and learn about Price to Earnings (PEs) one week and revenue and earnings growth the next week. You could also take a closer look at technical analysis by reading about trendlines and moving averages one week and chart formations the next. If you're just wanting to dip your toe in the water, learn about ETFs that mimic the major indices such as SPY, QQQ, DIA, and IWM.

Review your investments.

Put your growing knowledge to work and take the time to review your investments to ensure that you are satisfied with your positions, prospects, and allocations. With investing comes risks, so be sure to learn about and employ stops and limits if you're actively investing.

Discuss your investments or ideas.

Whether it's with a spouse or a friend with a common interest, it is good to talk about your field of interest and share ideas and provide support.

Remember, this investing isn't about instant gratification. Passion, coupled with time and experience, breeds confidence and results. It's all there for the taking.

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