



Prudential Investment Managers

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Four financial questions to ask before saying “I do”

You're smart about money, and so is your spouse-to-be! Or are they really? Opposites often attract – so it's well worth sitting down with your future Mr or Mrs and figuring out just how similar or different your money styles are. To help get the conversation going, here are four of the most important finance- and investment-related questions you'll need to ask **before getting hitched**.

Should we do it together, or stay separate?

First, get down to brass tacks. Every union has an aspect of 'yours, mine, ours' to it... and that will certainly apply to your money. Establish how much income each of you will bring into the relationship – and discuss debt as well. You don't want any nasty surprises after you've tied the knot!

If you're both working, decide if you're going to combine your **monthly budget** into one pot, or have two separate pots. If you choose two pots, you'll need to have the hard talk about your household budget, and how you split the bills. Will you pick up some items while your spouse picks up the others? Or will you just split the expense – either 50/50 or proportionate to your income?

What are your thoughts about children?

When you're starting a family, you'll need to figure out exactly what 'family' means. Do you both want children – and **if kids do come along**, what are your thoughts around their education? The reality is that kids cost money, so you may need to start saving now if you want to **send your baby (or babies) to a particular school**... and once that's over, there's also their tertiary education to consider! By the time they're out of high school, you might want your child to **study overseas**. That's still a good few years away, so something you may want to consider investing towards.

What are your long-term goals?

That's 'your' as in both singular and plural. Sit down and have a frank and honest discussion about your plans for the future – and be sure to cover all the awkward domestic questions in particular. Do you want to rent, or **buy a house**... and where? What about retirement: do you want to retire at or by a certain age? These goals may seem very far in the future – especially when all you want to do is plan a wedding! – but the sooner you and your partner get on the same page regarding your short-, medium- and especially long-term goals, the better!

Life has a habit of happening, of course, and some of those goals and priorities may change. Be sure to check in regularly – using our handy **online goal calculator** – to make sure you're on track and in sync.

What about retirement?

Retirement will fall under your discussion about long-term goals, but it's so important, it's worth making it a question all on its own. Ultimately, you and your spouse are each responsible for your own retirement, but if (like the old song goes) you think you'll still need them, still feed them, when they're sixty-four, then retirement is something you'll want to start investing towards, together... now. Establish what your combined retirement savings are, and how to get both of you heading in the right direction.

It's worth calling in the professionals for this discussion – especially if there's a **significant age gap between you and your new spouse**. A qualified **independent financial adviser** will be able to help you

both get on the right track with your investments and financial planning.

The sad truth is that money issues are often the main reason why couples don't end up lasting the distance. Having these tough conversations up front may not be easy, but it's certainly worth it in the long run.

For more information, speak to your financial adviser or feel free to contact our Client Services Team on 0860 105 775 or email us at query@prudential.co.za.