

Be an Informed Investor



Being informed is the best way to protect your money. To be an informed investor you should:

Understand How the Investment Works:

Before buying, ask these important questions:

- **How does the investment make money?** Does it pay dividends or interest?
- **What fees or commissions would I have to pay to buy, hold and sell the investment?** What effect will these fees have on the overall value of your portfolio?
- **What has to happen for the investment to increase or decrease in value?**
- **What risks are associated with this investment?** How easy would it be to sell the investment if I needed my money right away? Are there any restrictions or penalties involved if I want to sell?
- **Does the investment fit my goals and risk tolerance?**



Understand What You're Investing In:

Make sure you understand the company's business and whether it is making or losing money. If you are unfamiliar with reading and interpreting financial statements, ask your financial adviser or accountant to review them with you.

- **How long has the company been in business?** Investing in a company with little or no history or published information may involve more risk.
- **Is the company making money?**
- **What could affect the company's performance?**
- **Are there any red flags in the financial statements?** This could include increased expenses with no increase in sales, or negative cash flow.
- **How is the company managed?** Are there any ongoing legal issues with the company?



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Know Where to Find Information

Disclosure documents such as a prospectus, Fund Facts, or annual report can be a good source of information. While the prospectus is a comprehensive document about the investment opportunity, the fund facts is a more user-friendly document to help you make your investment decision. Your financial adviser can provide you with disclosure documents, and in some cases is required to do so before you invest.

You can also find information about the companies you invest in from media, newsletters, analysts' reports and the company itself. Be critical of what you read and never base your decision solely on websites, unsolicited emails or company news releases.

Protecting Your Investments

Here are some other tips to keep in mind:

- **There is no such thing as a no-risk investment.** Only buy investments that you are comfortable with.
- **Don't give in to high-pressure sales tactics.** Take your time when making investment decisions and never sign documents you do not understand.
- **Check to see if the firm and individual you're working with are registered with the [FCNB](#).**
- **If you have questions or concerns** about the investment, talk to your financial adviser.

Most public companies publish an annual report which includes financial statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A).

The MD&A is an explanation of events that affect the company's performance and expectations for the coming year and it may include information about significant events that took place during the fiscal year.

