

BASICS OF ESTATE PLANNING

It is never too early to plan your estate. If it is large, it could be exposed to inheritance tax at 40%, and if it is small, advance planning can help you ensure that your assets will go to your chosen beneficiaries.

Making a will

Estate planning begins with the following decisions:

- Who will inherit your assets?
- When should the recipients receive them?
- What limitations will be placed on the recipients?

A will should also stipulate who is to be your minor child(ren)'s guardian. Although making a will makes your decision legally binding, the will can be amended any time you change your mind.

Where should you begin?

Start by completing the following survey. Every 'no' answer indicates an area where estate planning issues should be addressed.

	Yes	No
1. Have you made a will?	___	___
2. Has your will been safely lodged so that others can access it after your death?	___	___
3. Does your will name a guardian for your children if both you and your partner die while they are still in their minority?	___	___
4. Have you considered how to fund the inheritance tax liability?	___	___
5. If you die suddenly, will your executors be able to locate all your records easily?	___	___
6. Do you have medium-term and long-term financial objectives?	___	___
7. Do you know the present value of your estate?	___	___
8. Are you comfortable with the executor(s) and trustees you have selected?	___	___
9. Have you arranged your affairs to take advantage of the NIL rate band and the inheritance tax exemptions?	___	___

10. Are you sure you have the right type and amount of life assurance? _____
11. Have you considered a trust to prevent assurance proceeds from being taxed as part of your estate? _____
12. Have you considered making gifts to family members that take advantage of the inheritance tax and capital gains tax exemptions and reliefs? _____
13. Are you sure your estate plan is up-to-date and takes into account all your personal wishes and all your potential tax saving strategies? _____
14. Have you considered how inheritance tax will affect your business? _____
15. Do you know what will happen to your business if you die? _____
16. Do you know that business assets can be given away without your having to pay capital gains tax? _____
17. Do you know how to give away business assets free of inheritance tax? _____
18. Have you considered the use of trusts in estate planning? _____
19. Do you know the advantages of an accumulation and maintenance trust? _____
20. Do you know the intentions of relatives with substantial estates? _____

SEEK OUR ADVICE FOR EVERY 'NO' ANSWER

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