



MAY 2016

A WELL-KEPT GARDEN

Written by David Ferrucci

For those of us in the northeast, it is exciting that spring has finally sprung! Among the many reasons I love the arrival of warm weather is the opportunity to work in the garden again.

This time of year, I always think of my favorite fictional character, Chauncey Gardiner, the simpleminded gardener in the novel, Being There. Though lacking the wits to understand his circumstance, Chauncey bumbles into Washington's elite political circle and soon becomes one of the President's top advisors. Capable only of delivering one gardening cliché after another, Chauncey's simplistic talk is mistaken for metaphorical economic wisdom. "There will be growth in the spring!" The President, along with the rest of the nation, are enamored with Chauncey, finding comfort in his grounded points of view. I also fell for Chauncey years ago, and to this day still recall many of his phrases. For its hopefulness and simplicity, one of my favorites: "All will be well in the garden."

This month, my gardening to-do list includes the usual pre-season weeding and mulching; anticipating the emergence of various perennials. I have also taken on the renovation of a larger garden in our back yard. Naturally, I enjoy sitting back and enjoying the view when all the work is complete, however, as I write this, the job is far from over. Presently, there are more holes in our back yard than we have trees, bushes, and perennials waiting to be planted! Though I set about my work with a master plan, I continue to make adjustments along the way. In that sense, I have always appreciated gardening as a metaphor for life in general and personal finances in particular.

Over the years, I have had the great pleasure of listening to others share their visions for the future; their hopes, dreams, and goals. Yet, as we all learn over time, change is inevitable and adjustments become essential. With regard to personal finances, change is also inescapable.

*"All will be well
in the garden."*

Speaking metaphorically – as did Chauncey Gardiner – our financial lives cycle through different seasons: winter provides opportunities for planning and implementing; in the spring, “There will be growth!”; summer offers warmth and enjoyment; and autumn is often a time of adjustment, which segues into planning and implementing again. Though our financial seasons don’t always correspond with those of Mother Nature, constant attention to our financial landscape is necessary if we want to maximize our opportunities for success. And the results can be quite fulfilling!

*“There will be growth
in the spring!”*



MARKETLIGHT

Written by Paul Ferrucci

As David expressed above, spring is finally here! With it, you may be planning to not only work in the garden, but also reorganize closets, air out rooms, and more. But have you given any thought to cleaning your technology? The changing of seasons is the perfect time to focus on some critical best practices for protecting your valuable information.

As the financial markets were fairly quiet in April, I'd like to continue the spring theme and provide an overview of five quick and simple spring cleaning projects for your cyber life. Paying attention to each of these areas could also help you shore up some security vulnerabilities in the process.

Cleaning Project #1: Your E-Mail

Your e-mail account holds a variety of information; from bills, to messages from friends, to receipts, to potentially sensitive things like tax information and other documents that should be well protected. The first step to protecting your e-mail account is to ensure that no one other than you can access it. Do this by implementing multifactor authentication, changing your password, and auditing the actual contents of your e-mail.

A good way to go about this would be to use the search feature to look for sensitive information. Try searching for e-mails that contain words like "password," "social," "tax," "account," "license," or "medical." If you find any, delete them! Also, check out some of the forwarding rules that you have set up. Your inbox may fill up quickly from day to day, making it easier to miss messages that contain sensitive information. Set up rules to move e-mails from

important senders to a folder that you are likely to maintain and clean up more regularly.

Cleaning Project #2: Your WiFi Network

Connecting to the Internet has never been easier. Many of us have had Wi-Fi set up in our homes, and the best thing is that our cable company tends to do all the heavy lifting on this. Nevertheless, our philosophy about protecting our devices shouldn't just be set-and-forget. Change your wireless network password (make it easy to remember but hard to guess), as well as the password for your network hardware (e.g., your router/firewall combo). Many times, this hardware comes with very simple, factory-default passwords that are documented online, so they absolutely should be changed!

Cleaning Project #3: Your Phone/Tablet

According to a 2015 study from Nottingham Trent University in England, the average user picks up his or her device 85 times a day! Why not take one of these instances as an opportunity to clean up some of your unused apps or to audit your privacy settings? Apple iOS 9 and Android 6.0 Marshmallow both provide controls to look through the specific permissions that an app is asking from you. You may want to turn some of these permissions off. On older devices, it may be best to delete the applications that you no longer use.

You'll also want to take advantage of the privacy features your device may offer (e.g., passwords, biometrics, encryption, and reset functionality). With the amount of

information that can be accessed from your mobile device alone, these security controls are critical, especially if your device is ever lost or stolen.

Cleaning Project #4: Your Computer

Now that you've wiped clean the dust and tidied up all of your documents, it's a good idea to look at the actual hardware and software. Be sure to use up-to-date antivirus software and check the auto-update feature if you don't want to manage this option manually. If you already have antivirus software in place, run a deep scan (also called a full scan) of your device. This could take some time, so plan accordingly.

Just as you audited your e-mail content, you'll also want to sift through any downloads, as well as your desktop and My Documents folders, for files you don't need anymore. Further, if you don't use some sort of backup, this might be a good time to look into getting one. If you already have backup, why not test it now to be sure that you can actually back up your files?

Cleaning Project #5: Your Old Stuff

As technology continues to change, we all need to find a safe means of getting rid of all of the old stuff that sits around in our basements or attics. There are a host of recycling companies that take all sorts of things, including phones, laptops, washing machines, TVs, and printers. Find a company that will both securely wipe any information from discarded devices if they contain hard drives and give you a certificate of destruction attesting to the proper recycling of your products.

The Ferrucci Company is a wealth management boutique where families turn for financial guidance and leadership, freeing them to pursue their most important goals and values.

David Ferrucci: Over twenty-five years ago, David began helping individuals, couples, and families make balanced – and smart! – financial decisions. Earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Trinity College, he focused his studies within the field of behavioral finance; an academic discipline that factors human elements into traditional economic assumptions. David also earned a Master's degree from Columbia University, where he examined the complex relationship between personal finance and family dynamics. Currently, he is pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree through Wesleyan University, deepening his understanding of personal, family, community, and global matters as they relate to finances. Today, David's expertise lies in the macro-economic realm of coordinating, synchronizing, and advancing individual and family goals.

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balance is a monthly feature written by Paul and David Ferrucci,
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