

PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM

Getting Married



Version 1.1

BASIC

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Instructor Preparation

Overview

Getting Married provides instructional content and activities that will allow participants identify key financial discussions to have when getting married.

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants should be able to:

- Analyze the financial considerations of marriage
- Examine the importance of creating spending plans for time at home and on deployment

Target Audience

The target audience for this lesson is military personnel and family members with a basic to intermediate knowledge of personal financial management.

Prerequisites

- *None, although familiarity with Personal Financial Management Program (PFMP) is expected*

USMC Financial Readiness Pillars

- Plan
- Save & Invest

Financial Education Action Point

Completion of this course meets the legal and policy requirements for financial education provided upon the marriage of a Service member. Unit should run the training event code “FC” after Marine completes this course.

Alignment to DoD Instruction 1322.34 Financial Readiness of Service Members

- Understand the fundamentals of creating and managing a spending plan, and the importance of updating a spending plan
- Understand the fundamentals of income tax and common tax benefits, and potential changes to tax situation
- Comprehend the components of Service member’s military retirement system and the importance of preparing for retirement
- Discuss the reasons, needs, types, and options for purchasing insurance
- Understand purpose and implications of estate planning (e.g., beneficiaries, wills, trusts, power of attorney)
- Discuss TRICARE options and costs
- Discuss survivor and dependent benefits, including Survivor Benefit Plan and Service members’ Group Life Insurance
- Recognize the importance of and be able to develop savings and an emergency fund

Getting Married

- Understand education financing, to include available benefits, obligations, and repayment options

Timing

You should complete this lesson within 27-60 minutes, depending on whether you complete the optional sections.

Topic	Time
Lesson Introduction	2 minutes
Preparing for Marriage	7 minutes
Money Habitudes ® Solitaire (Optional)	(30 minutes)
Financial Benefits and Considerations	5 minutes
Marrying a Non-Citizen (Optional)	(3 minutes)
Creating a Spending Plan	10 minutes
Lesson Summary	3 minutes
Total Time	27 – 60 minutes








Materials

- *Getting Married* Instructor Guide
- *Getting Married* PowerPoint Slides
- *Getting Married* Handouts:
 - *An Important Talk About Family Finances Before Your Wedding*
 - *Spending Plan Worksheet*
 - *Online Resources*
- Money Habitudes ® Solitaire cards – one deck per participant (Optional)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Pens, pencils, paper, markers


Getting Married

Icons

The following icons appear in the left-hand column of the Instructor Guide and serve as visual prompts as you present the training.

Icon	Purpose
<p>Slide X</p> 	Indicates that you will display a slide
	Indicates the time required to complete each topic
	Indicates that you will conduct an activity
	Indicates that you will ask a question to prompt discussion with the participants.
	Indicates that you will distribute a handout
	Indicates that you will show a video
	Indicates that you will transition to the next topic

Getting Married

Icon	Purpose
	Indicates that the instructor or participants will record key points on a chart paper

Lesson Preparation

- Prior to the training, thoroughly review all lesson materials, websites, and tools.
- Determine whether you plan to play the Money Habitudes® Solitaire game during the session.
- IF **YES**, then:
 - Review the card pack and the lesson instructions thoroughly before completing the activity.
 - Unhide and review slides 8-14 in your PowerPoint deck. To unhide these slides, open your PowerPoint deck, highlight **slides 8-13**, select **Slide Show**, and select **Hide Slide**.
- IF **NO**, then:
 - Keep slides 8-13 hidden in your PowerPoint deck.
- Make sure you have additional copies of the handout: *An Important Talk about Family Finances before the Wedding* so that participants can take a copy back to their partner, if necessary.
- Determine number of copies needed and print out the following handouts:
 - *An Important Talk About Family Finances Before Your Wedding* (Filename: HO_Talk_About_Family_Finances.docx)
 - *Spending Plan Worksheet* (Filename: HO_Spending_Plan_Worksheet.docx)
 - *Online Resources* (Filename: HO_Online_Resources.docx)

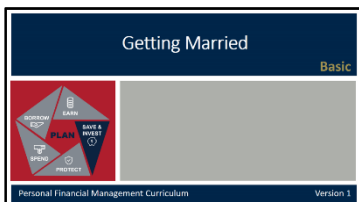
Instructor Presentation

Lesson Introduction



Lesson Introduction: **2 minutes.**

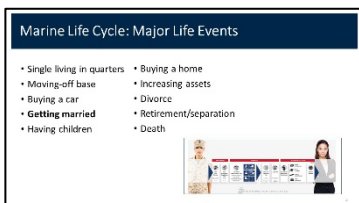
Slide 1



Introduce the lesson.

- Welcome to Getting Married.

Slide 2

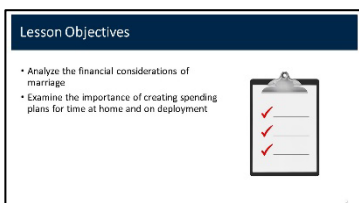


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Explain that getting married is one of life’s major events.

- Getting married is a very exciting time in your life. However, all major life events are complicated in their own way. For Marine families every phase of life has its own unique financial challenge.
- It is important that you understand these challenges as well as the resources that are available to you in managing these challenges.
- This can help you make informed decisions, minimize stress, avoid financial difficulties, and assist you and your loved ones to start off on the right foot no matter what major life event comes your way.

Slide 3



Note: This slide is animated and you will have to “click” several times for the entire text to appear.

Provide the learning objectives.

- After completing this lesson, you should be able to:
 - Analyze the financial considerations of marriage
 - Examine the importance of creating spending plans for time at home and on deployment



Transition to the first topic.

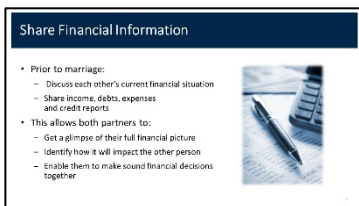
- We will begin this lesson by learning about the importance of financially preparing for marriage.

Preparing for Marriage



Preparing for Marriage: **7 minutes.**

Slide 4



Note: This slide is animated and you will have to “click” several times for the entire content to appear.

Explain the importance of sharing financial information with your partner.

- The decision to get married is one of the most important financial decisions a couple will make together.
- Prior to marriage, engaged couples should:
 - Discuss each other's current financial situation
 - Share information about income, debts, expenses, and credit reports
- This is an important step as it allows both partners to:
 - Get a glimpse of their full financial picture
 - Identify how it will impact the other person
 - Enable them to make sound financial decisions together
- Once they have a full grasp of their current financial situation, couples can create a realistic budget and set short- and long-term financial goals.

Ask:

- What could be the impact of not having this discussion?
Possible responses include:
 - The marriage could come under stress due to financial issues.
 - The couple may discover they have very different feelings about saving and spending money.
 - One partner may bring a large amount of debt to the marriage without the other's knowledge.



Slide 5



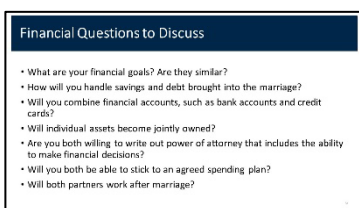
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Review tips for having a financial discussion with your partner.

- Finances are at the top of the list of decidedly unsexy topics to discuss with your partner. But money is a leading source of relationship stress and divorce.
- So, while it might not be romantic, financial conversations are essential to the health of your relationship.
- Some tips to start the process:
 - Learn about your “Money Personality” and your spouse's “Money Personality”
 - Start the conversation in a non-threatening way

- Gather any documents you might need
 - Talk about your financial goals
 - Keep emotions in check
 - Set a shared goal for something fun together
 - Ask for opinions and listen
 - If needed, identify where to get financial help
 - Set a dedicated time every week or month to discuss finances
- If you are not comfortable talking with your spouse about money then a good option is for both of you to take the PFM course *Money Habitudes: Discover Your Money Personality*.

Slide 6



Note: This slide is animated and you will have to “click” several times for the entire content to appear.

Review financial questions to discuss with your partner.

- This list provides an overview of questions that you should discuss with your partner.
- What are your financial goals? Are they similar?
- How will you handle savings and debt brought into the marriage?
 - Will debts and savings be treated as new marital property or will each spouse retain responsibility and ownership?
- Will you combine financial accounts, such as bank accounts and credit cards?
- Will individual assets become jointly owned?
 - Most states allow for an individual to retain individual ownership of assets brought into the marriage along with gifts that are held separately after marriage. If one or both partners has concerns, they should seek legal advice.
- Are you both willing to write out power of attorney that includes the ability to make financial decisions?
- Will you both be able to stick to an agreed spending plan?
 - A spending plan based on marital income, debt, and expenses that are a true reflection of their situation can be created and agreed upon prior to marriage.
 - This will ensure that they both understand each other’s issues or baggage prior to marriage and can determine if they can work through it.
 - Keep in mind, though, that creating a spending plan may be one thing but sticking to it is another.

- Will both partners work after marriage?
 - Your spouse can add to family income by working. However, when making your decision, you need to look at the true financial benefits and costs, beyond take home pay. Factors that can affect the financial viability of working include commuting costs, daycare expenses, insurance costs, and even tax implications.



Ask:

- What are some other topics to discuss?

Possible responses include:

- *How money was handled in each of their families.*
- *Who will pay bills?*
- *Major purchases, such as buying a house.*

Slide 7



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Review pre-marital education programs that are available to Marines.

- According to statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), marriages are more successful and enjoyable when couples go through pre-marital education programs and pre-marital counseling prior to saying, “I do.” This can lead not only to a significantly happier marriage, but it can reduce the stress of the pre-wedding period.
- Pre-marital education opportunities that are available to Marines include programs through the Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) (although you and your spouse can and should take advantage of these resources even after you get married):
 - **Personal Financial Management Program (PFMP)**, which offers financial education and financial counseling free of charge to Marines and their families.
 - **Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP)** is a skills-based training program that teaches married or engaged couples communication skills and ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy. The program’s aim is to prevent future marital problems including violence and divorce.
 - To find out about pre-marriage seminars available in your area, check with your installation Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) or the Chaplain’s Office.

- **L.I.N.K.S. (Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, and Skills)** is a volunteer, team-mentoring program designed by Marine Corps spouses.
 - This program offers an orientation to the Marine Corps lifestyle, which helps spouses, Marines, children and teens, and parents/extended family members understand and adapt to the unique challenges Marine Corps life often presents.
 - The program works through a partnership of volunteer spouses, MCFTB staff, Marine Corps career retention specialists, and Chaplains. They provide a positive environment for Marines and their families to learn to manage the demands of the Marine Corps lifestyle, and to learn to work together as a team in balancing family needs while meeting Marine Corps expectations.
 - Participants receive real-life tips, information on Marine Corps culture and available resources that enable them to help themselves. Information provided as part of the curriculum includes financial awareness and effective communication.
- **LifeSkills Training and Education** is a comprehensive collection of personal and professional skill building classes that promotes positive adjustments and improved individual and family functioning. It provides Marines and family members practical skills for successful interactions and positive outcomes at work, home, and in life.
- **Family Member Employment Assistance Program** provides employment related referral services, career and skill assessments, career coaching, job search guidance, portable career opportunities, and education center referrals/guidance.
- **Military OneSource** is a good resource to use when you are looking for pre-marital education and counseling. Their trained staff will be able to direct you to the appropriate resources.
- **Navy Chaplains** give classes and individual pre-marital counseling, depending on the installation. Check with your base Chaplain's Office to find a list of current classes or make an appointment for pre-marital counseling.



Transition to the next topic. If you are going to teach Money Habitudes ® move to that. If not move forward to discussing the financial benefits and considerations of marriage on page 14.

Money Habitudes® Solitaire (Optional)



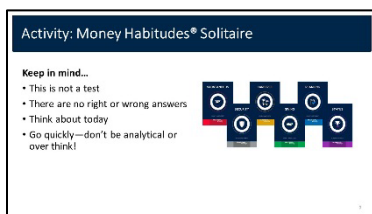
Money Habitudes® Solitaire: **30 minutes**.



Introduce the activity. (2 minutes)

- Explain that now we're going to complete the Money Habitudes card sort to further explore our financial values and habits.

Slide 8



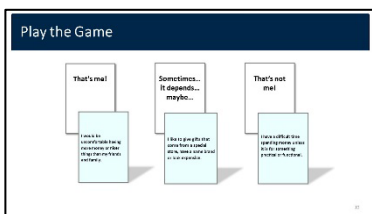
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- Tell the participants to keep the following in mind during this exercise:
 - This is not a test.
 - There are no right or wrong answers.
 - Think about today—not what you used to do or want to do in the future.
 - Go quickly—no analyzing or overthinking!



- Pass out the Money Habitudes Solitaire cards—one deck per participant.
- Have the participants take the cards out and find the green instructions card.
- Provide the following instructions for setting up the game:
 - Place the 3 sorting cards in front of you. The cards say, “That’s me!”, “Sometimes...it depends...maybe...”, and “That’s not me!”.
 - Put the 8 yellow cards back in the box. You’ll use them later to interpret your cards after you’ve sorted them.
 - Shuffle the remaining 54 statement cards.

Slide 9



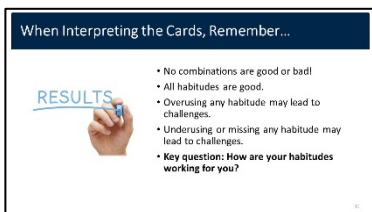
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Conduct the activity. (25 minutes)

Play the game.

- Provide the following instructions for playing the game:
 - Hold the statement cards so the printed side is up. Read each statement card.
 - Place the statement card under the sorting card that best describes your reaction to the statement. Don’t think too much. There are no right or wrong answers.
 - For example: "I feel I should pay the bill when I eat out with others." If you usually feel like you should pay, put it under “That’s me!”. If you don’t think you would pay for others, put it under “That’s not me!”. And if it depends on who it is, or on the situation, put it under “Sometimes...it depends...maybe...”.
 - Take about **10-15 minutes** to play the game. When you’re finished, you can begin to interpret your cards.

Slide 10

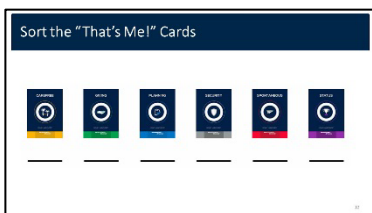


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Interpret the cards.

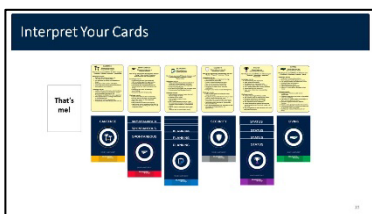
- Tell participants to keep the following in mind when they interpret their cards:
 - All habitudes are good.
 - No combination is good or bad!
 - Overusing any habitude may lead to challenges.
 - Underusing or not using any habitude may lead to challenges.
 - The key question is: How are your Money Habitudes working for you?

Slide 11



- Provide the following instructions for interpreting the cards:
 - Focus on the “That’s me!” pile. Put aside the other two piles but keep them in piles.
 - Sort the cards in the “That’s me!” pile by the pictures on the back. Write down how many cards are in each Money Habitudes category in your “That’s me!” pile. Write down how many there are altogether in your “That’s me!” pile.

Slide 12



- Next, take out the yellow interpretation cards. Match the yellow cards to your “That’s me!” cards by the name and picture of the habitude on each card.
- Read the yellow interpretation card for each habitude, beginning with the one that has the most cards in the “That’s me!” pile.
- If you’re missing a habitude, read the yellow interpretation card that describes it. Consider if there are advantages that would benefit you if you used this habitude more.
- Look for patterns. Ask yourself—Which habitude do I use when I feel good? When I’m stressed, angry, or tired? When I feel proud or have regrets? What people, situations, or stressors cause me to switch to a different habitude? How do my habitudes conflict with or complement the significant people in my life?

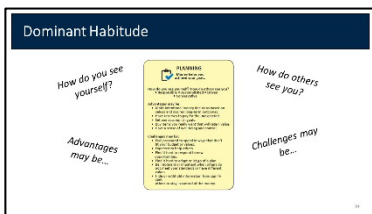


Debrief the activity. (3 minutes)

Ask:

- How many people had more than 20 cards in their “That’s me!” pile?
 - In general, this indicates that you are pulled in different directions, and even if you have good intentions, it may be hard to follow through.
- Does anyone have fewer than 10 cards in their “That’s me!” pile?
 - This typically indicates that you are very clear about what is important to you; however, it may be difficult to stay open to new ways of looking at things.

Slide 13



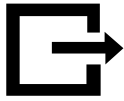
Explain dominant habitudes.

- If you have 4 or more cards in any one habitude, this is a dominant habitude. That means this is your default way of thinking and behaving, especially during times of stress or high emotion.
- There are 9 cards for each habitude. If you have 7, 8, or 9 cards in your dominant habitude, it’s a very strong message and you’re more likely to use that habitude very consistently.



Ask any of the following questions for discussion:

- Does your dominant habitude accurately describe how you would like to handle your money?
- How does it change when you are upset, angry, stressed, or under pressure?
- Who has more than one dominant habitude? How does that work for you?
- Who has a missing habitude? What are they?
- How can you use your understanding of your habitudes and triggers to help you reach your financial goals?



Transition to the next topic.

- Good money management is a mix of information, skills, and confidence. If you want to make wise choices, have financial stability, and successfully prepare for your financial future, consider your Money Habitudes results to help you determine how to focus and take the path to success.
- Now we will look at some of the financial benefits and considerations that come with marriage.

Financial Benefits and Considerations



Financial Benefits and Considerations: **5 minutes.**

Slide 14



Note: This slide is animated and you will have to “click” several times for the entire content to appear.

Discuss some of the financial benefits that are available to Marines after marriage.

- Military members who decide to get married while on active duty have many benefits available to them and their new family members (who **MUST** be registered dependents in DEERS):
 - Increased Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and additional housing options, such as military housing units that may be available.
 - Health insurance that will cover the spouse and children. A variety of spouse and family health care options exist in TRICARE and sometimes you may have to pay a portion of the cost for a health service or prescription. You have 90 days from the date of your marriage to update your TRICARE plan—to add your spouse, who must be in DEERS (as of 2019). As mentioned already there are several options, and the best place to learn about them is on the TRICARE website at: <https://tricare.mil/LifeEvents/Marriage>. The TRICARE Compare Cost Tool can help. Find it at: <https://tricare.mil/Costs/Compare>. Family separation allowance, which helps to financially compensate for spouses being away from the family due to deployment.
 - Relocation reimbursement for the cost of moving spouses and children during a permanent change of station (PCS).
 - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) home loans, which allow for zero money down to buy a home. (This program is also available to non-married Service members.)
 - Unemployment compensation for trailing spouses. More than half of states now provide unemployment compensation to military spouses who, because of military transfers, must leave their jobs.
 - Educational benefits that extend to spouses and children of Marines. Military spouses have access to programs, grants, and scholarships that can help pay for education and credentialing. If you or your spouse are interested in pursuing your education, check them out. To learn more, reach out to the Family Member Employment Assistance Program (FMEAP) or Voluntary Education staff at your installation.

- Free military air travel based on availability.
- Commissary and Military Exchange privileges, which allow military families to save up to 30 percent and shop tax-free.
- The Marines also have many free resources listed on the MCCC website. These include everything from advisors in finances to military spouse employment and more. These free resources can help your family save money.
- Savings in all these areas can add up quickly. The financial benefits to being married in the military are considerable and should be taken advantage of by Marines and their families.

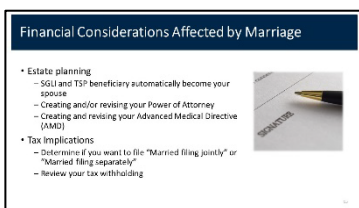


Ask:

- What other benefits can you think of?

Answers will vary.

Slide 15



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Discuss financial consideration that they should also address.

- Along with benefits, there are also special considerations that you should address.
- Review your estate planning.
 - After marriage, your SGLI and TSP beneficiary defaults to your spouse. If you want it to be different (for example, your spouse gets half and your parents half) you will need to change your designation.
 - If you have a Power of Attorney, you may now want to change it to your spouse. If you do not have a Power of Attorney, you should set it up now. Base Legal can help with this.
 - You should also review other important documents such as your will and your “living will” or Advanced Medical Directive (AMD). Make you are up-to-date and comfortable with your designated decision-makers.
- Review your tax situation.
 - After marriage, your tax status will change. You will have the option to file as “Married filing jointly” or “Married filing separately.”
 - Often, married couples get a tax break when “married filing jointly” but VITA and MilitaryOneSource’s Military Tax Consultants (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/financial-legal/tax-resource-center/tax-services-benefits>) can help you decide what is best for you; PFMs are not tax advisors.



Transition to the next topic.

- Now let’s talk about briefly about financial obligations if you marry a non-U.S. citizen.

Marrying a Non-U.S. Citizen (Optional)



Slide 16



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Marrying a Non-U.S. Citizen: **3 minutes. (Optional)**

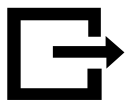
Instructor Note: Use if any course participants are married or getting married to a person who is not a U.S. citizen. If not, then skip this section. If so, ensure it is covered.

Introduce the topic.

- Many Service members find and fall in love with people who were not born in the United States and are not U.S. citizens. This situation brings its own set of financial obligations that need to be taken into consideration.
- **If not yet married:** Immigration laws require time and money to get your new spouse into the United States. Planning ahead can make traveling with your new spouse allowable in a shorter period of time. If you choose to bring your fiancé/fiancée to the United States to get married, you will have to fill out Form I-129F (Petition for Alien Fiancé[e]) six months before your travel date; it has a \$535 filing fee (as of 2018).
- **If you are already married:** You will need to submit an I-130 (Petition for Alien Relative) six months before traveling to the U.S., and it will cost \$535 (as of 2018).
- This is just the beginning when it comes to the immigration process, which is complicated and lengthy. So, do your research first and plan!
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), has established a toll-free military help line, 877-CIS-4MIL (877-247-4645), TTY (800) 877-8339 and e-mail address at militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov exclusively for current members of the military and their families as well as veterans. Further information can be found by using this free resource.

Transition to the next topic.

- Now let’s look at the developing a budget or spending plan that works for both of you.



Developing a Spending Plan



Developing a Spending Plan: **10 minutes.**

Introduce the topic.

- Military couples should consider developing a spending plan as soon as possible. It is best to develop two separate spending plans. One spending plan to cover expenses while the military spouse is at home and one for when the spouse is deployed (but let's start with just one).

Ask:

- Why is a spending plan important when getting married?

Possible responses include:

- *Your income may change*
- *Your expenses will change*
- *One or both you may be bringing debt into the relationship*
- *Financial goals now need to reflect goals as a couple and not as an individual*
- *Building a spending plan can help you discuss financial issues that may be uncomfortable*

Slide 17



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Expand upon the topic.

- Salaries often vary substantially when the Marine is deployed, so partners need to agree on how this extra money is going to be spent, or whether it will be saved, used to pay down debt, invested, or even used to purchase something special for the family. These are important topics to be discussed during the spending plan process.
- This section will provide only a brief overview on spending plans. **The PFM curriculum offers a course specifically on creating a spending plan. I recommend you take that course or set up an appointment with me or another PFM, to work together on creating your spending plan.**
- When creating your spending plan, you should bring all income and debts to the table: The best way to start talking about your budget is to bring all your “cards to the table.” This means everything. Bring your most recent pay stubs, leave and earnings statements, as well as copies of all your bills. This includes car payments, insurance payments, allotments, credit card bills, store credit, bank statements, layaways, student loan information, etc. You should also each review your credit reports.



Ask:

- Why is it important to review your credit reports as part of this process?

Possible responses include:

- *To ensure it adequately reflects you and your partner's individual situations*
- *To ensure you and your partner both have a clear picture of your financial situation*
- *To take during the spending plan process to address any problems that may have been uncovered*

- Remind the participants that the PFM curriculum also includes lessons on Credit and Debt Management.



Ask:

- How might your insurance needs and costs change when you get married?

Possible responses include:

- *You may want to increase the coverage on your renter's or homeowners insurance to include your partner's belongings*
- *You may want to purchase life insurance for your partner*
- *You may want to update or merge your car insurance policies*
- *You'll need to ensure you have healthcare for your non-military spouse*

Continue discussing the spending plan process.

- **Categorize information:** Once both partners bring their information to the table, you can then begin categorizing your information. Put short-term debt, credit cards, and layaways in one category. Long-term debt, such as school loans, car loans, or boat loans goes into another. If there is real estate, that has its own category. It is also a good idea for both individuals to track their spending on ATM/Debit cards which can add up just as quickly as debt.
- **Add up all income and debts:** After all the incoming money is added together and all the outgoing debt added together, you will have a clearer picture of how much extra money you will have as a couple to spend on "fun" activities.
- **Set up a spending plan.**
- If one spouse earns substantially more income or one spouse has substantially more debt, it is wise to see a financial specialist.

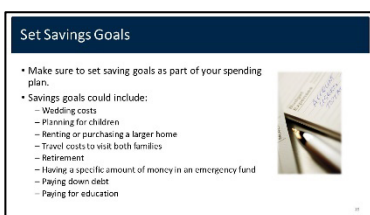
- You may want to set up some percentage-based payments. Percentage-based payments give the situation a monetary percentage about who is paying how much for what. If this approach works for both spouses, it may contribute effective handling of the couple's financial arena and potentially help to avoid conflict.
- There are many other ways to approach creating a spending plan. Leverage your PFM specialist or CFS to assist you in determining a budgeting method that is agreeable to both spouses. I encourage you to make an appointment for both spouses with the PFM-



Distribute the *Handout: Spending Plan Worksheet*.

- This worksheet can be used to draft a spending plan.
- You may also be able to find worksheets and apps online to assist you.
- Review your plan and priorities every few months. It is critical to review your plan when you reach a major life event like marriage, birth of a child, promotion, PCS move, divorce, or transition to civilian life.
- A spending plan is a “living document” that will change with your needs and situation. Your spending plan should be flexible enough to change with whatever comes your way.
- It is also important to remember that budgeting is a process. Once you have a budget, you need to track what you are spending and compare it to your budget.

Slide 18



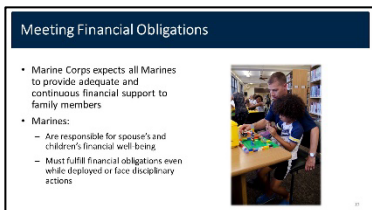
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Emphasize the importance of setting savings goals.

- Make sure to set saving goals as part of your spending plan.
- Savings is an important consideration for a married couple. It can be even more complicated if one of you is a saver and one is a spender. Every couple has to find a balance that works for them but failing to save is a sure road to marital discord.
- Savings goals could include:
 - Wedding costs
 - Planning for children
 - Renting or purchasing a larger home
 - Travel costs to visit both families
 - Planning for retirement, including saving a specific amount per month for each spouse's retirement
 - Having a specific amount saved in emergency fund
 - Pay off or pay down debt, including student loan debt



Slide 19



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- Paying for one or both of you going back to school

Ask:

- How might you meet your saving goals?

Possible responses include:

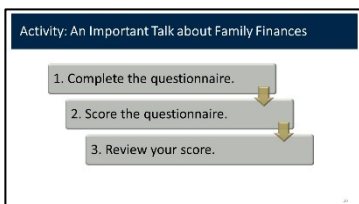
- Create a separate account for a specific savings goal.
- Begin or expand savings for retirement for both partners now.

Discuss the importance of meeting financial obligations.

- The Marine Corps expects all Marines to provide adequate and continuous financial support to family members.
- It is important that prior to getting married, Marines be well-informed of the requirements governing financial support of spouses and children.
- Marines:
 - Are responsible for spouse's and children's financial well-being. As long as you are married to your spouse, you will be responsible for his or her financial well-being. Even if you are legally separated and or living apart, until the divorce is legal and final, you will still be responsible for their financial well-being.
 - Must meet financial obligations while deployed. While you are deployed, you will still be responsible for ensuring debts are paid on time, and for the continued support of your spouse and children.
- If your chain of command finds you delinquent in meeting your financial obligations, disciplinary actions can be taken. These include counseling statements, letters of reprimand or admonishment, or awarded Article 15, nonjudicial punishment (NJP).
- It is better, therefore, to be completely aware of the implications and financial responsibilities of marriage ahead of time, rather than be surprised later on.



Slide 20



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Activity: An Important Talk about Family Finances (8 minutes)

Introduce the activity. (1 minute)

- Explain that this questionnaire is to assess how much you and your future partner know about each other’s finances and financial goals.
- Emphasize that this information is for your use only. You do not need to share any of this information with the other people in the room.
- If your partner is in the room with you, you should both complete the questionnaire and discuss it together later. If your partner is not here, you may take an additional copy of the questionnaire for him/her to complete later.

Conduct the activity. (6 minutes)

Complete the questionnaire:

- Distribute the Handout: An Important Talk About Family Finances Before the Wedding.
- Emphasize that to set off on a sound financial footing, you should answer every question.
- Give participants about **5 minutes** to complete the questionnaire.
- Tell the participants they should score themselves after completing the questions.

Debrief the activity. (1 minute)

Ask (Optional):

- Would anyone like to share thoughts or reactions to their initial financial communication score? Is it close to what you expected? Were you surprised by your score? Why?
- Remind participants that the intention of this baseline score is to help identify potential challenges for communicating about potential financial issues. Having a completed sheet makes a great conversation starter if this is a topic that is difficult for them as a couple.
- Encourage participants to share their results with their future partner and strategize actions they can take to make sure that they are financially secure.

Transition to the next topic.

- Let’s summarize what we’ve discussed today.

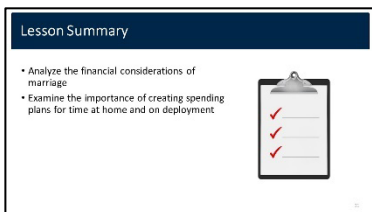


Lesson Summary



Lesson Summary: **3 minutes.**

Slide 21



Note: This slide is animated and you will have to “click” several times for the entire text to appear.

Summarize key learning points.

- Now that you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:
 - Analyze the financial considerations of marriage
 - Examine the importance of creating spending plans for time at home and on deployment

Share upcoming classes about the topics that were covered in this lesson.

- If you or your spouse want to learn more about any of the topics we have covered, there is probably an upcoming class on that topic and if there isn't you and your spouse can (and should!) make an appointment with your PFM.
- Classes include:
 - Money Habitudes: Discover Your Money Personality
 - Developing a Spending Plan
 - Communicating about Money
 - Exploring Your Financial Values and Habits
 - Introduction to Credit
 - Introduction to Debt Management
 - Establishing Savings
 - Death of an Active Duty Spouse (for those with AD spouses)
 - Death of a Spouse (for those with civilian spouses)
 - Introduction to Life Insurance and Purchasing Life Insurance

Ask:

- Are there any questions or comments about *Getting Married*?





Distribute the resources handout.

- This handout: *Online Resources* identifies where to get additional information.

Instructor Resources

Key Terms

- **Command Financial Specialist (CFS):** A unit level E-6 or above designated by the command and trained by the Personal Financial Management (PFM) counselor to provide financial classes and basic counseling to Marines within the unit.
- **Major Life Event:** Events that may be sudden in nature or have evolved over time and often causes financial challenges and stress. Examples include: death, divorce, marriage, separation, retirement, unemployment, health, and parenthood.
- **Legal assistance:** Legal advice, counseling, and other help provided by the Base Legal Services Office to eligible clients pertaining to their personal legal affairs.
- **Legal Services Office:** An office on a military installation providing legal assistance services to eligible clients.
- **Power of attorney (POA):** A legal document giving authority to another individual to act on someone's behalf in a legal or business matter.
- **Pre-marital financial counseling:** A counseling session in which couples who are planning to get married meet with a financial counselor to receive information on financial topics, including reviewing their current combined financial situation.
- **Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP):** A skills-based training program that teaches married or engaged couples' communication skills and ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy. The program's aim is to prevent future marital problems including violence and divorce.
- **Spending plan:** A written budget that allows an individual to achieve financial goals through proper management of money from paychecks and other sources of income. This plan allots specific amounts of money for particular uses. It is more commonly referred to as a budget.

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