

INDEPENDENT
FOCUS
FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES



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ABOUT US



BACKGROUND

Independent Focus is headed up by Chris Preen, a B.Comm graduate and Certified Financial Planner (CFP) with over twenty years experience in the financial services industry. Chris served for six years as the founder and director of Consolidated Portfolio Advisors, a leading financial advisory firm in Durban. In 2001 this business was sold to a national financial advisory firm and Chris relocated to Cape Town, a place he fell in love with when his parents moved there in the 1990s. Independent Focus was established in 2003 as a small, professional firm delivering Ethical, Expert and Efficient (the 3 E's) advice and service to its clientele in the Western Cape.

Chris's views on personal finance are well known nationally, having published various articles and a book on these topics.



BENEFITS OF CHOOSING INDEPENDENT FOCUS

Independent advice

It is increasingly difficult to obtain truly independent advice in the financial arena. The vast majority of financial advisors experience some pressure (through either negative or positive incentives) to place business with "preferred providers". As our name suggests, we will never compromise our independence. Assurance and investment solutions will always be placed on merit alone, not on bonus trips overseas or enhanced commission kick-backs. The objectivity of our advice is further bolstered by our new fee-only option of remuneration.

Code of Conduct

As a full member of the Financial Planning Institute (FPI) Chris Preen is bound by its stringent code of conduct. The FPI, although South African based, is an internationally recognised professional council.

Personalised on-going service

We do not believe in "one-size-fits-all" solutions. Every client's situation is dealt with individually and comprehensively. Due to our business model we will never land in a situation where we have more clients than we can provide comprehensive, in-depth, personalised on-going service.

A specialised, yet holistic approach

At Independent Focus we strive to specialise in our core activities, but at the same time integrate all of our solutions within the greater retirement, estate and tax planning environments. We look at your "big picture" situation, not just little bits here and there. At the same time we are not jacks-of-all-trades

Transparency

Every recommendation we make is put in a written easy-to-understand report. All costs and fees are declared up-front. We also agree with every client on what can be expected from us - how many times a year we will meet, how often we will provide portfolio updates etc.



Security

We do not accept any premiums or investments ourselves, with all client monies being paid direct to the respective financial institutions. As a professional certified financial planner, Chris is covered by Professional Indemnity Insurance to the value of R 1 million, which would cover any client claims in the unlikely event of negligent advice on Chris's part.



SERVICES



RETIREMENT PLANNING

Retirement planning" is a broad term employed by most financial advisors. It is important, however, to distinguish between three phases within the process: Pre-retirement, At retirement and Post-retirement. Whilst Independent Focus operates in all three phases, we are specialists in "At retirement" and "Post-retirement" planning, and believe that these critical phases require dedicated expertise. A minefield of constantly changing tax legislation needs to be considered and it is essential to get a professionally prepared report covering all options and angles.

Products:

Compulsory, voluntary and living Annuities, Income Plans, Preservation funds, Retirement Annuities, Individual and corporate provident and pension schemes, Deferred Compensation, Severance Packages, Tax structuring.



INVESTMENT PLANNING

With the explosion in the array and complexity of investment products available (both locally and internationally), finding your way through the investment landscape is increasingly difficult. An experienced, qualified guide is essential. Chris Preen has over twenty years "hands-on" experience in this field (read more/...) and his articles on the subject have appeared in the national press. In 1999 he authored the book "Lump Sum Investment" which was published by Struik.

Products:

Unit Trusts, Linked-products, Managed Portfolios, Endowments (regular, traded, guaranteed and offshore), Money Market, Offshore investments, Tax structuring.

ESTATE PLANNING

As Oscar Wilde once said: "There are only two certainties in life - death and taxes". In estate planning these twin perils come together in the form of "death taxes" (more commonly referred to as "estate duty" by our friends at the SARS). Many South Africans don't give much thought to estate duty, some even unaware that a tax of 20% will be levied on their assets (above the threshold) upon their death. This is a travesty as a few hours of skilled estate planning can often reduce estate duty to nil, in a perfectly legal and acceptable manner. There is a common misconception that estate planning revolves around simply taking out life assurance. In reality it is far more complex than that, and in many instances a hard-sold life policy will only serve to increase the estate duty burden.

ESTATE PLANNING cont/...

With the recent surge in the South African residential property market, it is not uncommon for heirs to be facing estate duty bills of R 500 000 and higher, considerable sums that warrant the time and effort of some prudent planning. With the introduction of Capital Gains Tax, this area has become even more complex and individuals are advised to seek professional help.

Products:

Wills, Trust formation, Life and disability assurance, PPS, Tax structuring (Estate duty and CGT).

BUSINESS ASSURANCE

Having worked as a Senior Business Advisor for Business Partners (formerly the SBDC), Chris is well attuned to the needs of small and medium sized businesses. It is the independent businessman, more than anyone else, who requires careful retirement and income protection planning. Employees of large organisations are provided for by their compulsory pension funds. It is critical that the business owner put these provisions in place him or herself. Skillful planning can often result in substantial tax savings, and always increases the businesses credibility with lenders, customers and staff.

Products:

Income protectors, PPS, Partnership Buy and Sell Agreements, Keyman policies, Small group pension and provident funds, Preferred compensation, Restraints of Trade.

**CONTACT US TODAY FOR A FREE NON-OBLIGATORY APPOINTMENT
TO DISCUSS YOUR NEEDS AND GOALS**



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