

ADVICE ON BETTER MANAGING YOUR FINANCES

SERVICE & CREDIT CHARGES

**A few tips to help you
come out ahead!**

AT AN ATM NEAR YOU...

Using your financial institution's automated teller machine (ATM) instead of another institution's ATM for your withdrawals is a good way to keep your service charges down. Also, avoid no-name ATMs (at bars, convenience stores, etc.), which may charge additional fees.

A CHEQUE IS LIKE CASH

When you write a cheque, it's important to have the funds in your account until the cheque has been cashed. Otherwise, your bank will charge you administration fees of at least \$40 per NSF (non-sufficient funds) cheque, and your credit file could be affected. The person to whom the cheque is made out may also charge you fees.

THE PERFECT PLAN!

Opting for a fixed monthly fee plan is the perfect way to stabilize your service charges. Since you know what your monthly fees will be, there are no surprises at the end of the month and no account maintenance fees. Be sure to choose the plan that best corresponds to your banking habits and to adhere to the number and type of transactions it includes.

A MONEY-SAVING OPTION

For an annual fee, the majority of financial institutions give their clients the option of a significant reduction in their regular credit card interest rate. This is a useful option for cardholders who do not pay their full balance every month.

AUTOMATED SERVICES? AUTOMATICALLY LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE CONVENIENT.

No big surprise there. Using automated services (ATMs, the Internet, mobile services, etc.) instead of teller services is another great way of cutting back on your service charges. But did you know that by choosing direct deposit for your paycheque, tax refunds, government benefits and more, your money is deposited directly into your account and your funds are fully available on the appropriate date? You don't even have to go anywhere!

THE GOAL: PAYING IN FULL ON TIME

A credit card is a very convenient method of payment. When used wisely, it can help you build a good credit file. You should aim to pay your balance in full every month before the due date on your statement to avoid interest charges. If you pay only the minimum amount, interest charges apply to all purchases until the balance is paid in full.

LINE OF CREDIT OR CREDIT CARD? BOTH HAVE A ROLE.

A line of credit offers flexibility that is available at all times in case of unforeseen events. The variable rate is determined according to your financial situation. You pay interest only on the portion of the line of credit that you use; you can pay back the amount you borrow at any time without penalty. On the other hand, a credit card is a convenient means of paying everyday expenses. To manage your budget effectively and avoid debt overload, remember that one card is all you need.

THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU TAKE OUT AN ADVANCE.

Even though it's possible to get a cash advance on your credit card, think twice about whether you really need it. The 21-day grace period for purchases made with your credit card doesn't apply to cash advances: interest charges are calculated from the day the funds are advanced.

HOW'S YOUR RATING?

What exactly is a credit rating? It's essentially your ability to pay the amounts you owe by the due date. Your rating is established according to your payment history for all your financial commitments (rent, credit card, cell phone, etc.). Lenders use this rating to check the credit risk you represent. A poor credit history can be a real obstacle to your future plans (car, home, etc.). That's why it's important to protect your rating by paying the amounts you owe by the deadline.

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