

Dear Investor, What the HELL Are You Doing? Smart and Easy Ways to Fix the Mistakes You Make with Your Money

Ken Weber

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This straight talk about investing mistakes from an investment professional is optimistic and accessible.

The title of Ken Weber's book—*Dear Investor, What the HELL Are You Doing?*—says it all: his intent is to bluntly detail the typical blunders made by investors, because “if you clear away all the mistakes, smart, rational investing is not terribly difficult.” In a no-nonsense, direct style complemented by a highly readable format with lots of subheads and short chapters, Weber dispenses with many of the mistakes he has seen over and over again in working with clients as a registered investment advisor for almost thirty years.

Weber addresses numerous key issues: how investors let emotions affect their decisions, how some investors get hooked on marketing hype, why investing in individual stocks can be dangerous, why it is unwise to work with stockbrokers, the difference between speculating and investing, and more. Weber debunks many of today's investment practices; for example, he pillories financial talk shows and stock-market reporting, indicating that “following your holdings on an hourly or daily basis and micromanaging your portfolio can do little more than heighten your anxiety.” When it comes to trying to time the market, he advises against it: “No one that I know of can time the market successfully with any consistency. Period.”

To keep from coming across as overwhelmingly negative, the author tempers his commentary about all the things investors shouldn't do with plenty of positive alternatives. Instead of market timing, for example, he endorses dollar cost averaging. He explains why, rather than work with stockbrokers, investors should rely on investment advisors. He also offers sound, objective advice about estate planning, minimizing investment taxes, annuities, and life and long-term-care insurance. The nine tips at the end of the book—Weber's “best suggestions to help take you to that financial nirvana you've been seeking”—are so on-target that they may well be worth the price of the book.

Some investors may wince in recognition while reading *Dear Investor, What the HELL are You Doing?*, but the short-term pain is likely to lead to long-term gain—that is, if they follow Ken Weber's wise and witty advice.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Spring 2015)

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