

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM



DAVID BRESSLER

**A FUN & SOCIALLY
CONSCIOUS PLAN TO HELP THE
99% GET STARTED INVESTING**

<http://ElephantsPaycheck.com>

I hope you enjoy this short introduction to The Elephant in the Room has a Paycheck. It's been a labor of love; one I'm excited to share with an audience who can benefit from its straightforward style.

If you like this introduction, I hope you decide to **buy the book**.

Not sure? **Sign up for my mailing list** to stay in touch. I send one or two emails a month, usually highlighting the articles readers liked best.

Not a reader, but want help getting started investing? I have a 5-step coaching plan we can work on together to get you started. **Drop me a line** and we'll talk to see if it's right for you.

Of course, feel free to **reach out directly** with questions or feedback. It's a great world we live in, where we can reach out and speak directly to the people behind the products we use. I'd love to meet you.

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Preface

I knew that I had this book inside me; I just never knew what it was waiting for before coming out.

It turns out, it was waiting for my wife. She gave me the human perspective that makes this book compelling. The human element is what keeps this book focused on what matters to the reader.

With her in mind (and you'll read the tale of how we met in the introduction) I was able to create a story that's easy to read and educates -- something that's both fun and prescriptive.

Have you ever felt like you should be saving more for the future, but didn't know where to start? Do you feel that the advice your brokerage firm is giving you doesn't quite resonate with your situation?

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by "getting started investing" tomes full of math that never once tell you anything practical? Books that give you choice after choice, without a word of advice -- or a simple "how to"?

It's challenging for experts to relate to "regular people" who don't have the same experience or education as the expert. Frankly, I felt the same way about the situation in technology, where I started my career. The people that create your software can't quite understand why you don't know to use it like they do. The news media doesn't help either, since seems like financial news sites are being run by ESPN producers.

Making things simpler is where I excel. I will tell you a story to help you internalize what you're learning so that it's meaningful to you. I'll help you find a perspective to redefine your investing experience and then show you how to start and how to stay on track.

Even if you've never invested before, you can start this book with as little as \$250 and end owning part of a company. If your portfolio is larger -- for example, you're rolling over a 401(k) into an IRA-- you can follow this plan to understand just how well prepared for retirement you are.

I will help eliminate the fear of starting down the road and will guide you in building a plan. I'll share step-by-step exactly what you should do to get started. I'll help you filter out the fear and anxiety driven sports-reporting-style financial news so that you can learn more about what matters to you for your investments.

Of course, it's not only about building wealth. The best plan won't work unless you stick to it. It's about the human behavior behind investing, why it's so hard to stick to a plan, and what we can do about it.

One way to see why people can't stick to their plans is to look at their habit in writing. Let's say you start a given month with \$1,000 in your account. You save \$200 during the month, but when you look at the end of the month you have \$900 in your account. "Stick it out" everyone says. "It's good for you" they shout. But losing \$100 isn't fun. And it's definitely not motivating.

What if I could show you how to measure your success so that investing becomes fun? What if I could keep you motivated enough to look for ways to save more - so that you'd want, and even look forward to peeking at your monthly statement?

That's why this book is different. I purposely focus on what matters -- and *I make it clear why*. I tell you a story through metaphor to help you internalize the Elephant's Paycheck Blueprint. You'll develop a satisfying mastery over your investing behavior and continue to learn more over time, without having to get an accounting degree or an MBA. You'll be able to create a plan that intuitively makes sense, aligns to your social values, and doesn't require you to become an investment manager on the side.

Throughout the book, I'll share the unique metrics I've created that I've designed to change your perspective. It's a change that will make investing fun, and will also make it easier for you to plan for your future.

The investing techniques used in this book are as old as the market itself. The "innovation", if you will, is around the story we tell and the metrics that have been designed to reinforce the behavior we want to establish. Your money is yours; your fees are minimal, trending towards zero. That's part of the reason your broker won't tell you about this strategy -- but I'll elaborate on that next in the introduction.

First, let's start where every story starts -- at the beginning.

Introduction

Money making money

I'll never forget the feeling of meeting my first love. I don't even think I was ten years old at the time.

All I had to do was put money in a bank account, and every three months, the bank would give me more money.

I remember going to the bank for no reason other than having my passbook stamped with my new, *higher*, balance. (This was the 1970's, way before digital. You'd have something that looked like a passport, only it was stamped by the bank for every transaction.) I loved the idea of my money making money --of earning more without having to work more. (Though of course at the time, I was too young to work.)

A gift was the spark

I was thirteen when I received my first five shares of stock in a public utility. The utility paid a dividend, a quarterly distribution by the company to shareholders, and the account was setup to reinvest the dividends. That meant that instead of a check, I received more shares of the company each quarter.

As the number of shares I owned grew, so did the income they generated.

I was hooked.

The company's dividends earned me more than the interest on my bank account balance. Of course, that extra income brought with it extra risk. The share price could go up or down, where my bank account balance was always the same. As a utility, it was considered a lower risk than the broader stock market, which is why my parents' friends had selected it as a birthday present.

I would come to learn that with opportunity for reward comes additional risk. But risk isn't a black box. You can make decisions that in practice, if not in theory, lower your risk.

At that time, there was so much to learn. I had a lot of questions, for which I was finding very few answers:

How should I invest so that I could earn more than I could just by working alone?

Could I invest in such a way that the income I earned from my investments covered my expenses without having to touch my principal? Could I do this for retirement, and retire early? Or for safety, should I find myself unemployed?

As it turned out, the answers were – yes, I could. And, more importantly, so can you. I'm excited to share how with as many people as possible.

I hope you enjoyed what you read!

If you did, please **buy the book**.

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