



For Immediate Release

Smaller Tax Refunds Are Better for Investors

Millions of 401(k) investors would make more money by lowering their tax refunds

Arlington, VA: April 15th has passed and many of the 100 million taxpayers are eagerly awaiting their refunds. While receiving extra cash may seem like a bonus, “By increasing their allocation to their 401(k) plans in an amount equal to their tax refunds, investors would pay less taxes while increasing their retirement nest eggs,” said Mark Schwanbeck, author of *Your 401(k) Handbook: 2004 Employees’ Guide to Investments and Decisions*. According to Schwanbeck, depending on how long until an investor retires, allocating as little as an extra \$36 per pay check will result in thousands of extra dollars in his or her nest egg.

Schwanbeck discusses savings strategies like this one in his book. *Your 401(k) Handbook*, which targets employees participating in their companies’ 401(k) plans and focuses on the investments, asset allocations, and retirement decisions that 401(k) investors face. The book helps readers:

- Decide how much to save
- Understand what they need to know about stocks, bonds, and mutual funds
- Allocate their savings based on age and other factors
- Avoid financial mistakes that could leave them with too few dollars to retire
- Increase their savings by rolling over money to another 401(k) or IRA when they change jobs
- Determine when they should take a loan from their plan
- Minimize the taxes they will pay by using a 401(k) plan’s tax shelter features
- Take advantage of special funds that are only offered in 401(k) plans
- Evaluate the performance of their plan’s investment options
- Maximize the retirement benefits from their 401(k), IRA and pension plans
- Navigate the plan’s rules and IRS 401(k) regulations
- Understand the brochures and materials their company provides

Your 401(k) Handbook offers common sense rules that help workers create a well-rounded portfolio of stocks and bonds. The rules encourage novice investors to save, learn investment basics, diversify their portfolio, ignore fads, avoid loans, minimize company stock, rollover their account when leaving the company or retiring, consider their whole portfolio, plan early for retirement, and get help. (See sidebar for *Your 401(k) Handbook’s Ten Rules*.)

“The rules discussed in the book are not new,” Schwanbeck said. “But, many were forgotten during the bull market in the 1990s. I want employees to focus on strategies that will enable them to save for retirement, not to beat next year’s market averages.”

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The first *Your 401(k) Handbook* was published in 2003. This year's edition includes new information about headline-making issues such as market timing and late trading in mutual funds, with emphasis on what employees should know and do to protect their 401(k) investments. The book's examples and recommendations have also been updated with 2003 market data, and the latest IRS regulations and contribution limits. *Your 401(k) Handbook* includes a ten page, 136 word, financial glossary that provides a quick reference to many investment terms a 401(k) investor will see in plan documents and a full index to help readers find the information they need. A companion website at www.yourmoneypress.com provides readers with additional information and updates after the book is purchased.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Schwanbeck is a consultant and author of personal finance books and articles. This is his third book about 401(k) investors. His first book, *Your 401(k) Plan: How and Where to Invest*, published in 1996 by Irwin Professional Publishing (an imprint of McGraw-Hill School Education Group), was one of the first books written for employees facing the challenges of investing in a 401(k) plan and saving for retirement. Schwanbeck works closely with investment management firms, 401(k) plan administrators, financial planners and tax advisors to create corporate pension plans. In his corporate career, he worked for a Fortune 200 media company* where he managed a \$2 billion defined benefit pension plan. In 1984, he helped the company establish its first 401(k) plan and directed its investment strategy as the employee savings grew to \$1 billion. Before establishing his consulting practice, he headed J.P. Morgan Investment Management Company's Marketing Strategy and Communications department and worked as an Investment Officer at Strategic Investment Partners, Inc. (Arlington, VA).

*The Times Mirror Company, which was subsequently purchased by the Tribune Company

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Your 401(k) Handbook: 2004 Employees' Guide to Investments and Decisions

by Mark L. Schwanbeck

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