

Financial Counselling Where & Why



Seeking financial counsel is similar to seeing a doctor when you are ill. When your finances are not in good health and threaten to take you down, you need to seek advice to put your house back in order.



Background

In its annual credit policy statement for 2007-08, Reserve Bank Of India advised leading banks to set up credit counselling centres on an experimental basis to help borrowers. Some banks have taken the lead and set up these centres as trusts, manned by retired bank officials, to provide free credit counselling and financial counselling.



Seeking Help

Financial counselling centres educate customers on various financial products, making them aware of their rights and responsibilities; offer advice on credit-related problems of borrowers, helping them in consolidating their debt; and in completing the formalities required to solve problems relating to their debts.



Why Counselling?

While making some financial decisions, we tend to lean on the advice

of friends and relatives. However, when faced with a crunch, we do not like to speak to them about it. We worry about social stigma; we dislike the news about our broke situation going around; we fear being ostracized. Seeking the help of a knowledgeable third party could be the right thing to do.



Confidentiality

Financial counsellors will agree to keep your data confidential. Their job is to listen to your problems, offer you alternative solutions and help you choose and implement what is right for you. They handhold you through the process, with the objective of bailing you out of your situation. They do not have any vested interest in your data and information.



Services

Financial counselling centres are set up by banks as trusts, to help their troubled borrowers. Counsellors are available to assist anyone seek-

SMS CONTEST

Question

Financial counselling centres are set up usually by _____.

Answer

- A. groups of borrowers
- B. banks
- C. the Government

To answer: SMS DISHA A, B or C to 53030 and win a 2N 3D holiday.* Contest open for the day of publication.

*Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.dishafc.org for details and winners.

ing their help, without restricting themselves to their own bank's customers. Financial counselling centres also conduct awareness programmes and educational campaigns to spread knowledge and information to present and potential borrowers.

The Difference

When you are in a problem and try to look for options, you tend to find conflicting views. This is because each problem is unique in the way in which it has developed, and therefore cannot be solved by an off-the-shelf solution. Financial counsellors work on this understanding and therefore bring together a solution that suits your specific need.



DID YOU KNOW?

Financial counselling centres set up by banks provide their services free of cost.

FAQs

Why have banks set up financial counselling centres?

Banks deal with a large number of customers and disburse various types of loans to them. Most borrowers are not wilful defaulters. Banks believe that with counselling, borrowers can be given quality advice and help to repay their loans.

Can I visit a counsellor several times?

Yes, you can see your counsellor until your present problems are resolved, and meet him/her again if you have the need.

If you have a financial predicament and need to seek advice on what your options are and how to go about executing the necessary steps, visit a well-meaning financial counselling centre such as Disha.

Center for Investment Education and Learning

We welcome your questions, suggestions and feedback on this column. Please use the 'Email Us' link at www.icicibank.com or send as an SMS to 53030. Please include your full name, address and phone number. Your comments may be edited for clarity and space.

Walk in for free counselling

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