FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

"One of life's most painful moments comes when we must admit that we didn't do our homework, that we are not prepared." ~ Merlin Olsen

Issue #283
July 17, 2026

Give the People What They Want

At first I thought about calling this issue "How to Write a Successful Investment Newsletter." Not that I've ever had such a thing, though I strongly suspect that I know what I'd need to do to make that happen. It's really quite simple: give the people what they want.

You see, most of the people who read such things (those who can still read) don't read them to learn how to be a better investor, to obtain data about key metrics such as valuation and investor sentiment, or to hear about new potential opportunities or risks. No, instead, most investors are looking for *permission* from an apparent authority in the field so they can do what their dopamine-flooded brain is begging them to do, at the same time that the quiet voice in their gut is warning them that they're about to make a big (and costly) mistake.

The vast majority of the time, they've heard about how some stock/fund/industry/asset class/country has appreciated rapidly in value (or has consistently posted outsized gains over quite some time), or they've heard a compelling story about why that will happen soon. FOMO compels them to act, yet their gut is telling them no, so they seek validation for the decision that they've already made (without much due diligence).

They're just looking for a quick “sanity check,” and the more mad the crowd becomes, the more their subconscious tells them to check their own sanity. Unfortunately, due to Confirmation Bias (which is just one of over 100 known cognitive biases that prevent the human brain from making “rational” financial decisions), their “sanity check” is merely a performative ritual instead of a sincere desire to seek, know and understand reality and the Truth.

So, if I wanted to get a lot of subscribers and make some money from this side hobby, I would write about topics such as this:

SpaceX stock is going to the moon and you should buy as many shares as you can at whatever the IPO offering price is.

Five reasons why AI will eliminate poverty and make work optional for everyone, and why you should be pouring money into the stock (or call options) of hyperscalers, chip makers, data centers, etc.

Why you should allocate 5% of your portfolio to one particular cryptocurrency, and how it differs from its 8,147 competitors.

Instead, I write about things like this:

The best investment you can make is in your own health, knowledge, skills, preps and network.

Patience is the best virtue an investor can have, followed by courage during times of great fear.

You're either a contrarian or you're roadkill.

Keep a big chunk of your portfolio in assets that are safe (or that have low volatility) and that have low correlation with the major asset classes so you can avoid financial ruin and live to fight another day. (This will also give you plenty of cash to buy assets that are cheap and hated.)

Obtain enough diversification to essentially eliminate unsystematic risk.

Invest in small cap value stocks that have a long history of increasing their dividend each year.

Avoid the stock of companies that have become *de facto* social justice nonprofits.

Respect the shorts.

Ignore the financial media and stop checking on the value of your portfolio every day.

Instead of trying to get rich quick, master the habits that will allow you to become financially independent over the long term.

Become a skeptic and avoid becoming a bagholder. Permanently turn your BS detector to the maximum setting.

Pause and think before you act. Practice mindfulness and self-awareness, which is the meta-skill of the 21st Century.

Read at least one book about behavioral finance and understand how your brain's many cognitive biases can hinder your ability to have a successful investment experience.

Know history, which is the story of governments debasing their currency and defaulting on their debt.

And that is the primary reason why, despite publishing a new issue every week for nearly five and a half years, my newsletter remains small, obscure and unread: because I don't give the people what they want.

Follow Me on X

Newsletter Archive

I would love to hear from you! If you have any comments, suggestions, insight/wisdom, or you'd like to share a great article, please leave a comment.

Disclaimer

The content of this newsletter is intended to be and should be used for informational/ educational purposes only. You should not assume that it is accurate or that following my recommendations will produce a positive result for you. You should either do your own research and analysis, or hire a qualified professional who is aware of the facts and circumstances of your individual situation.

Financial Preparedness LLC is not a registered investment advisor. I am not an attorney, accountant, doctor, nutritionist or psychologist. I am not YOUR financial planner or investment advisor, and you are not my client.

Investments carry risk, are not guaranteed, and do fluctuate in value, and you can lose your entire investment. Past performance is not indicative of future performance. You should not invest in something you don't understand, or put all of your eggs in one basket.

Before starting a new diet or exercise regimen, you should consult with a doctor, nutritionist, dietician, or personal trainer.