

## Monthly Newsletter – January 2016

### A Message from Theo and Warren

From an investor and financial markets point of view, 2015 was dominated by three factors – the sell-off in commodities due to weaker Chinese growth prospects, the weakening of the rand and then the very poor and disturbing lack of judgement shown by President Zuma when he replaced Finance Minister Nene without cabinet or party consultation, and without any logical reason.

We take comfort from the fact that the ANC reacted swiftly by nullifying the appointment of Minister van Rooyen and replacing him with Minister Gordhan. We have to accept that the damage will be with us for as long as President Zuma is in office, but given the circumstances of Minister Gordhan's appointment and the pressure from ratings agencies, we believe our finance minister will have the space to stick to sound policies and will not be bullied into making irrational decisions.

The rand lost 26% of its value against the dollar during 2015, and the bulk of this drop can be attributed to external factors (weak commodity prices and a strong dollar) with around 10% due to disappointing leadership and the lack of implementation of the government's own plans (the NDP) and policies.

For South Africa, the next four months will be dominated by the upcoming municipal elections, specifically to what extent the opposition parties can make inroads in the major metropolitan areas. Expect rhetoric, accusations and disturbing promises from politicians as they fight for their jobs!

We still believe a diversified portfolio, with proper international exposure, will provide the optimal balance between providing a real return and being able to manage the risk involved in investments. We are continuously reviewing the offshore component of the portfolios and will be monitoring events in the next few months to determine how to adjust our offshore allocations.

*- Theo and Warren*

### Dealing with post-holiday blues

The holidays are over, it's January, and it can take some time to get back into the swing of things. You may even be experiencing some post-holiday blues in the first working week or two of the year.

Here are some suggestions on how to beat the back-to-work blues:

1. Fill up on good news – there are some great good news initiatives like Awesome SA and SA Good News. Traditional news media run on doom and gloom, but you can choose to read about some of the good things that happen in our country every day – there's a bigger

picture.

2. Start planning your next holiday – you should have a brand new batch of paid leave days, and if you work for yourself, a brand new schedule. Block out some holiday time and start planning where you want to go, and what it's going to cost you.
3. Tidy up – if you left your desk in a mess before you left, now's the time to fix that. Spend a morning or a day, if necessary, organising your work space. Tidy up your desk space, shelves and files, clean out your inbox and delete ancient electronic files. Sweeping away the cobwebs of tired, pre-holiday you, will get you off to a great start in 2016.

## 5 leadership mistakes to avoid in 2016

1. Only focusing on the big picture. Great leaders focus on the big picture and inspire people with their vision, but you need to outline small goals for people to reach along the way. And don't forget to applaud small wins as well as the big ones.
2. Doing everything yourself. Don't be a micro-manager – it's not feasible, and it doesn't empower people. Hand out the work, and hand it over. People who are micro-managed don't feel trusted and they don't deliver, because they're always trying to second-guess the boss.
3. Communicating poorly. Communication skills require work. Watch your tone; beware of making assumptions about what knowledge other people have when you give them a task to do. Leaders who communicate well inspire action, innovation, teamwork and creativity.
4. Setting yourself apart. The worst leaders are those who believe they're better than everyone else and don't bother to hide it. Get to know your team; spend time with them. And don't ever ask them to do something you wouldn't be willing to do yourself.
5. Discouraging innovation. If you are truly fostering creativity among your team, there must be room for them to fail. No-one creates something perfect the first time around – there are many failures along the way. Ensure you are vocal about which projects your team can really try to innovate new solutions for and when things don't work out, be supportive instead of upset.

## Top cancer-fighting foods

We all should know that no single food can prevent cancer, and the aim should always be to eat a wide variety of whole foods, but there are some foods that seem to have some cancer-fighting properties.

Fruits and vegetables are rich in cancer-fighting nutrients – and the more colourful they are, the more nutrients they contain. They also help you to maintain a healthy weight, which decreases your risk of a number of cancers, such as colon, oesophageal, breast and kidney cancers.

So, which are the superfoods?

- Folate is an important B vitamin that may help protect against cancers of the colon, rectum, and breast and is found in fortified breakfast cereals and whole-wheat products as well as

orange juice, melons and strawberries.

- Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, an anti-oxidant that increases in potency when tomatoes are cooked.
- Tea, especially green tea, may be a strong cancer fighter. In laboratory studies, green tea has slowed or prevented the development of cancer in colon, liver, breast, and prostate cells.
- Grapes and grape juice, especially purple and red grapes, contain resveratrol, which has strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.
- Beans contain several potent phytochemicals that may protect the body's cells against damage that can lead to cancer. In the lab these substances both slowed tumour growth and prevented tumours from releasing substances that damage nearby cells.
- Cruciferous vegetables include broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, and kale. Components in these vegetables may help your body defend against cancers such as colon, breast, lung, and cervix.
- Strawberries and raspberries have a phytochemical called ellagic acid. This powerful antioxidant may actually fight cancer in several ways at once, including deactivating certain cancer-causing substances and slowing the growth of cancer cells.

They can't do it alone, of course, but eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight should both be part of your plan to lower your risk of contracting cancer.

Source: [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)