



In This Issue:

Should you check email at the start of the day?

Loans and Hardship Withdrawals: New Rules for Employees Dealing With Natural Disasters and Other Financial Emergencies

How Student Debt Affects Retirement Savings

Lawmakers Hear From Small Businesses About Tax Reform Impact



Keeping You
On Target.

Should you check email at the start of the day?



Some productivity experts recommend not checking email until later in the day, but it's important to consider your specific job and responsibilities before following this advice. Here are four situations in which it makes sense to check email in the morning.

Visit U.S. News & World Report to [read more](#).

How to Control Google's Tracking of Your Web Activity

Google has launched a webpage that makes it easier to control what the company logs about your online activity. The move is part of Google's response to EU privacy regulations.

[Read the full article](#) at CNBC.

Treating Numbers Like Numbers
and People Like People



1.800.331.5325 wopcpa.com

Meet Our Newest Partner, MaryEllen Prance



MaryEllen Prance focuses on clients in the nonprofit, small business, and construction industries. She is credentialed as a Certified Public Accountant and joined the firm in July 2002. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the North Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants.

MaryEllen's role involves intimate analysis of financial and operational documentation from clients, managing the audit process, and reviewing financial statements with members of management. She supervises and manages the audit staff and is responsible for training and scheduling to ensure the staff meet and exceed client expectations. Her dual focus on a close relationship with the staff and constant focus on client needs is the foundation of ensuring timely delivery for client engagements. MaryEllen is also a member of the firm's Accounting and Auditing committee which is established to develop and maintain the policies and procedures of the firm's accounting and auditing practice. She is a graduate of North Carolina State University's Master of Accounting program and received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Accountancy from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.



Advice for Overcoming Decision Biases

CEOs can avoid biases and make better decisions by gathering input from staff representing diverse perspectives. Leaders can avoid hindsight bias and learn more from a project that failed if all the circumstances and input that occurred at its start are recorded.

[See the full article](#) at McKinsey.



IRS Issues New Strategic Plan; Five-Year Plan's Goal to Help Taxpayers



WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today released a new five-year Strategic Plan outlining goals to improve taxpayer service and tax administration.

The Fiscal Year 2018-2022 [IRS Strategic Plan](#) will serve as a roadmap to help guide the agency's programs and operations. The plan will also help meet the changing needs of taxpayers and members of the tax community.

[Click here to read more.](#)

How Student Debt Affects Retirement Savings



People with student loan debt tend to have lower 401(k) balances than those who are debt-free, research shows. This kind of debt may affect people across age levels but is especially common among younger families.

[Click here for more from Forbes.](#)

Loans and Hardship Withdrawals: New Rules for Employees Dealing With Natural Disasters and Other Financial Emergencies

Natural disasters including Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, as well as the California wildfires, caused a record-breaking \$283 billion in damage to homes and other property in 2017, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



Meanwhile, more than a third of participants surveyed in the 2017 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey by consulting firm Willis Towers Watson said they suffered a moderate to severe financial hardship last year. About 80 percent of the survey respondents said they were living paycheck to paycheck.

Whether due to a natural disaster or otherwise, it's clear that many participants need access to cash to pay for unexpected expenses. Two new laws—the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA)—coupled with new Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules for victims of natural disasters have helped broaden defined contribution loan and withdrawal options for participants who find themselves in financial distress.

[Read the full article here.](#)



Lawmakers Hear From Small Businesses About Tax Reform Impact

The House Ways and Means Tax Policy Subcommittee held a hearing Wednesday on how the new tax law is affecting small businesses, hearing testimony from a CPA firm owner and others.

Read the full article at [Accounting Today](#).