

Investment Seminars Prevention Checklist

The atmosphere at investment seminars can be charged and exciting, and once you're there it can be difficult to avoid the high pressure sales tactics.

RECOGNIZE IT

Some companies or "investment clubs" invite potential investors to a "seminar" as a way to recruit new investors. The seminar or club may boast of investment experts or even a self-made millionaire who gives advice on investing. If you are approached about attending a seminar about an investment opportunity, look carefully at what exactly the opportunity is offering.

CHECK IT OUT

Protect yourself from investment seminars scams by using this checklist :

- **Be wary of sales pitches to attend free seminars or promises of a free meal or gift.** Once you are there, you may have to pay fees and commissions that you were not aware of.
- **Don't be fooled by "limited time offers".** If someone is pressuring you and you're uncomfortable, decline the offer or seek advice from an independent financial adviser.
- **Watch for claims of a secret or exclusive technique for building wealth.** The salespeople at seminars can make misleading claims that may entice you to sign up.
- **Think critically about promises to "be a millionaire in three years" and "get rich quick".** Use common sense and do your own research. Always check first before investing.
- **Listen for excessive use of financial jargon.** This is intended to make you feel intimidated so that you are less inclined to ask questions. If you don't understand something about the investment, ask.
- **Be aware of talk of tax avoidance or moving money offshore.** You can defer paying taxes, but you can't avoid paying them.
- **Do your own research before attending an investment seminar.** Family members and friends may try to involve you without having done any research on what is being offered, who is offering it or what risks are involved.
- **Check if the company or individual offering the investment is in good standing** with securities regulators. Check for any disciplinary action such as enforcement decisions or upcoming hearings.

PREVENT IT

Stop scam artists in their tracks. If you've been approached to attend an investment seminar or have been a victim of an unsuitable investment as a result of attending a seminar, contact the Alberta Securities Commission at 1-877-355-4488 or email inquiries@asc.ca.