

Each time Jack received a 3-4% raise, he would always increase his 401k contribution by at least 1%. As he eventually reached the maximum contributions over the years, he took advantage of other useful company benefits as well, such as Accidental Death and the Health Savings Plan. Once those plans were funded as much as possible, Jack began setting money aside for his kids' college accounts and paying down his primary mortgage.

About 7 years ago when Jack was 47, he began feeling like his plan might just work. For him, the success of his plan was not the amount of funds he had saved, but that he and his wife had established habits of living well below their income levels. They were simply enjoying life on a conservative budget. Through creative means, Jack and his wife were able to travel, eat out, and do many things that would have otherwise cost thousands of dollars.

When asked if he feels like his retirement is secure, Jack says although he occasionally worries about market crashes and unforeseen health concerns, he feels like his retirement is safe and that those concerns are probably overblown.

Flexibility is the single most satisfying thing about Jack's retirement. He describes this as flexibility in the timing of when he does things, what order he gets things done, and also, the ability to change his mind and do whatever whenever within his financial framework.

## What Worked:

- **Have a plan.**
- **Start early with contributions and increase those amounts annually, let compounding do its magic.**
- **Budget your expenses while you are working and be thrifty and economical. (A penny saved could be better than a penny earned because you don't have to pay taxes on amount saved).**