



Beirut, March 2015

As my clients and, indeed, seminar attendees are aware, I am of the professional opinion that diversification is key, and am a keen advocate of such considerations being taken into account when building a portfolio. (Think John Bogle, founder of Vanguard and index fund pioneer: *"Don't look for the needle in the haystack. Just buy the haystack!"*). I have on many occasions discussed the benefits of investing in a spread of sectors, asset classes, and countries (and, sometimes, currencies), to ensure one is not over-exposed to an individual area that could increase risk and enhance losses.

The principles of diversification can be applied not only to sectors and asset classes, but also to managers and advisors.

For too long the public has been misled and encouraged to believe that banks are the best, and sometimes only, institutions through which they can manage an investment portfolio effectively and efficiently.

This is simply not true.

Banks do indeed employ skilled professionals, with the objective of building a client base who entrust the bank to 'look after' their savings and investments; these professionals are often competent and successful. But - and there is always a but - these professionals are, almost without exception, employed by the banks themselves and therefore remunerated, measured, rewarded and judged on what business they bring into that bank. Because of this, these professionals are seldom in a position to display sufficient impartiality when providing advice or recommendations, since they are often tied to their employer's products, funds, propositions, or approved/preferred providers.

This is not to say that one should not engage the services of their bank's investment advisors, but should instead consider diversifying their savings and investments across different advisors, as well as across different sectors.

Pembroke Associates is an international company employing skilled, UK-Qualified, experienced, vetted Financial Planners. Each of our Financial Planners is required to pass a strict vetting procedure and undergo comprehensive periodic training, which includes updates on regulations, tax legislation, and investment matters. They then offer professional and personalised advice to clients around the globe, specifically aimed at building a unique portfolio based upon each clients' individual wishes, circumstances, and aspirations.

Pembroke prides itself in being completely independent - free to choose from any provider, leaving us able to recommend the most suitable product for clients' objectives, regardless of which investment company offers a particular product or service. Of course, investments change over time, as do our clients' circumstances. Our independence from any bank, investment provider, or corporate shareholders to answer to, ensures we are able to manage your portfolio to provide flexibility in a changing environment. Should it be deemed prudent, we will recommend changes to another investment, without the hindrance of being restricted by a limited number of options, as may be the case with some of the bank-employed advisors.

In a low-interest rate environment, with uncertain outlooks for global economies, deficits, and inflationary risks, never has the need for good quality, and more importantly, impartial, financial advice been more important. We understand that savers wish to have access to a return higher than may be available from cash deposits, but require guidance as to what products are suitable. We believe this guidance should be offered without limits and without restrictions on product choice.

Pembroke specialise in planning for expatriates, and are experts in both investment planning, regular savings advice (pension planning, school fees planning) and UK pension advice. We build our advice around a number of principles, which include tax efficiency, administrative ease, government backed investor protection, and efficient estate/death planning.

We welcome any enquiries, free of any obligation whatsoever, to Lebanon@pembroke-associates.com . We are pleased to provide testimonials from other clients upon request.

Glen Richards Cert PFS, Cert CII (MP)
Managing Partner
Pembroke Associates
<http://www.pembroke-associates.com>

Pembroke's services have been well-received in Lebanon, and their proposition has resulted in an increasing client base in the region. They have assisted clients in tracing lost pensions, tailoring existing pensions to specific client circumstances, obtaining higher value from assets, and protecting wealth and clients' families from avoidable tax burdens. Senior Consultants spend 1 week per month in Beirut assisting and servicing clients and potential clients.