

Wow. Spring Break is finally here. That means it's the last week of Tax Season! This is usually where I do my happy dance and start to plan my first couple of days after and do nothing, hide from the phones and then plan to start all over again.

My tax season never really officially ends. I still have to nag my clients, make sure that they have done some of things that I have suggested and remind those that are begging for extensions that **IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY!!** An extension is extra time for filing. Not paying.

With that said, I want to give you some thought about what may have gone wrong on your tax return or better ways to think of things for next tax season.

Did you get a rather large refund? Do you like that or do you like to be able to pay the utility bills and be able to meet other obligations during the year? If you want less of a refund, then change your withholding to a higher number. The higher the number on the W-4, the less they will take out of your check. This doesn't mean to just change things willy nilly or during the year to get more back for a couple of weeks. That leads to trouble. Use the tax calculator at IRS.GOV. This site is a great tool to use!

Did you owe? Change your withholding to have more taken out. You can do this for Federal and/or State. Have them withhold extra money if you need to! It's easier to pay it during the year than in April, all at once.

Do you have a child that is turning 17 in 2011? You need to worry about what your taxes were this year. You will be losing \$1,000 right away this year. Got one going to college next year? You could have a higher refund!

If you are self employed, check with a financial advisor about Self Retirement Plans. They range from a Solo 401(k) to different IRA's. This could lower your self employment taxes.

Have a 401(k) at work? Not contributing???? Put as much money into it as allowed. This will lower your taxable income.

And then the most important one: During the year, meet with your Tax Pro, or do it yourself. Check your withholdings. Make sure that the deductions are what you want it to be. Take the amount withheld for Federal Withholding and divide it by your Gross pay. What's the percentage amount? Is it where you need to be?

One final thought: **IF YOU THINK THAT YOU OWE, GET YOUR TAXES DONE EARLIER!!!** Don't procrastinate. It's easier to figure out where to get the money from within two or three months than days.

Thank you for allowing me to help you this year. It has been an honor and pleasure. Please don't forget that if you need help during the year or have questions, I will be glad to help out. Reach me at kristhetaxlady@gmail.com