

## Drifting or Dragging?

There are a lot racing styles out there and an equal number of techniques. Drifting is a relatively new sport and race style where drivers pilot their cars around tracks with the rear end “sideways” as much as possible around every turn. Cars tuned for drifting are very powerful to begin with or modified with turbo and superchargers to make them ultra powerful. Many drifters opt for import cars but some modify old or new muscle cars to drift. These cars need to be able to break the rear wheels free at anytime, on pavement, to get the drift going and keep in alive through the corners. They also need dynamic suspensions to deal with all of the stresses of turning back and forth and run for long, hard races. When I was a kid drifting wasn’t a type of race or even a technique – we just called it going sideways because it feels like your car is traveling down the road sideways. Another cool aspect of this race is that your wheels are often turned in the opposite direction of the way you want to go – to get the back end of the car back to where it should be or needs to be based on what turns are coming up. This concept is known as counter steering and most of us have experienced it in winter when the car is doing things you don’t want it to be doing while your frantically turning the wheel back and forth trying to avoid that tree. ☺ I wonder if the tire companies invested this type of race because you only get a few days life out of your tires when you participate in it. ☺

Drag racing is a very different animal – get from point A to point B, always in a straight line as fast as humanly possible. The old muscle cars of the 50’s 60’s and 70’s were built for this. Put fat tires on the car, wheelie bars, a big motor and hope for the best. These cars use tires so large the wheel wells are often consumed by overly wide, tall treadles tires for maximum traction down the quarter mile. Today’s high end dragsters need a parachute to slow down – they go over 300mph in a quarter of a mile. That sounds like fun too, but I’ve never had the chance to pilot one. These cars don’t run for very long, the pass down the line may only take 5 – 15 seconds, depending on the class you’re racing in.

In your investment portfolio what strategy are you employing? Most folks want to get from where they are to where they want to go quickly and it may seem like it’s a drag race. The problem arises when things “come up” as they always do. If you’re in a dragster and need to turn, good luck. You can turn real slowly but at speed forget it; you’re likely going off road or flipping very fast. If your car is built for drifting and you end up in a drag race, you’ll be outmatched with too little power and not enough traction. The bottom line is your financial world is much more complicated than one race – it’s a journey that will take decades. You need to be ready for different environments so flexibility is the key to winning. The strategy you employ in the beginning of your working career is likely to be very different than the one you use in retirement. We recommend never getting into something you cannot get out of or change on a dime to make sure you’re ready for the next leg of the race. Mike Chadwick can be reached at 860 489 8880 or [mike@fiscalwisdom.com](mailto:mike@fiscalwisdom.com)

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