

# Mehta & Mehta: *a Life and Business Partnership*

**D**evika and I are one of only two husband-and-wife teams working together as Notaries in BC.

Devika has been a Notary since 1993, in a busy little office on the West Side of Vancouver.

We have worked together since we got married 17 years ago. It all started with a small retail business—selling cards, art, and picture frames in a shopping mall in North Vancouver. Devika took care of the front line, dealing with the customers, while I carried out the administrative duties in the background. Christmas was, of course, our favourite time of the year because 30 percent of our annual revenues were generated within a four-week period.



Reality usually set in as soon as Boxing Day had passed—we'd have to keep working the long hours for another 11 months.

After several years in the business, I thought it imperative to find another source of income and to break away from the seven-day grind. I had had some success



with my real estate investments and decided to pursue a career as a Realtor. Soon I was enjoying the fruits of my labour and even went on to complete a four-year program in Urban Land Economics at UBC.

By this time, Devika had decided she no longer enjoyed the demanding hours and wasn't mentally stimulated. So when I suggested that she look into a career as a Notary Public, she was very intrigued. Before we were married, Devika had

worked as a legal assistant; her formal training includes a diploma in Business Administration from BCIT.

After two gruelling interviews with The Society, Devika was accepted as a Notarial Candidate. She was one of the youngest in her class and she fared well. After successfully completing the program, Devika articulated for several months with Notaries Carolynne Maguire and Rashida Samji. To this day, she speaks highly of the support and the experience she received from her two mentors.

In January of 1995, Mehta & Associates, Notary Public, and Mehta & Associates Realty jointly opened their doors in the busy Broadway corridor of Vancouver. It wasn't the best timing because the real estate market was in a downturn. I remember saying to Devika, "If we can survive this market, we'll really be smiling when there's an upturn."

We would travel to work in the same car, share the same office space, take lunches together, and even take work to the dinner table. Most of our friends are amazed when I say I love working with my wife.

In May of 2000, we celebrated the arrival of our first child, a baby girl. We were at the brink of a new challenge. Devika was forced to return to her busy practice, which meant I had to work from home and also play the part of Mr. Mom.

Devika worked three days a week and I would work the other two. In 2002 I decided that Devika's practice needed a full-time Notary so the best decision was for me to also become a Notary. Having already worked in the real estate industry and with a good working knowledge of a Notary practice, I managed to convince Wayne Braid I was a good candidate. Soon I found myself wearing yet another hat.

With a second child on the way, being Mr. Mom, working as a Realtor/developer, and being a student proved a huge challenge.

The training format put together by The Society's Education Committee—particularly the use of technology for marking assignments and the bulletin board—was very impressive. The program had come a long way from when Devika graduated in 1993.

In May 2004, together with 15 other candidates, I graduated and was granted my commission as a Notary Public. The very next day, there was a package addressed to me from the Royal Bank with mortgage instructions. My new life as a Notary had begun. Since then, every day brings a new challenge and something new to learn. I'm coping only because of the terrific support from my wife and her personal assistant. I'm very proud to be the "Associate," for the moment, that is!

Despite the long hours and the challenge of managing a busy office while raising two young girls, both Devika and I are convinced we have chosen a very respectable profession, one that has given us both the opportunity to realize our dreams. ▲

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