

A foundation of service

Since day one, **Michael Dehal** has built his practice on providing impeccable service to his clients

MICHAEL DEHAL has a simple message for each of his clients: “I cannot guarantee market returns, but I can guarantee that each and every client will receive the gold standard in service.”

Currently an SVP and portfolio manager at Dehal Investment Partners at Raymond James, Dehal was originally attracted to the industry as a teen, when he would read the business section daily. His father opened a trust account for him, and he purchased his first three stocks: Zi Corporation, Forzani Group and Microsoft. Those initial experiences helped set the foundation for his philosophy today.

“I quickly found out the importance of investing for the long term and buying quality stocks,” he says. “I have always had that long-term focus of owning good-quality companies that pay dividends – because why not get paid while you wait?”

After earning a bachelor of commerce at McMaster and an MBA at Queen’s, Dehal had the chance to work on both the investment and capital markets sides of the industry. Along the way, he earned his CMA/CPA and CIM and became licensed to offer services to US residents.

The latter has become another value-add

for Dehal, who has two lines of business: private wealth management and institutional cash management. Because he helps many corporations with their cash management, his cross-border capabilities allow him to offer them multinational wealth management services. It also comes in handy for employees of companies who get transferred to the US.

“The US component is something that is unique to our firm,” he says. “It allows us to broaden our horizons in both Canada and the US. We are seeing more of it, not only with people who get transferred for work, but also snowbirds and those who just don’t want to have an advisor in both countries.”

Yet Dehal’s core value is still the service he provides. “I have worked in different areas of

the financial industry, and what has helped me as an advisor is my commitment to clients,” he says. “Your clients have put their trust and confidence in you, and you have to give it back to them with service. Service is picking up their call regardless of the time of day, answering their emails right away, and constantly educating and communicating with them so they don’t feel uneasy during volatile times.”

That commitment to service is something Dehal has put an emphasis on from day one. “I am a big believer in transparency, especially now when fees are in focus,” he explains. “When my clients get their statements, they see what they pay me and what services I provide, such as investment management, financial planning, and tax and estate plan-

A PERSONAL APPROACH TO GIVING BACK



Dehal was born with cleft lip and palate, so supporting that cause is dear to him. Each year, he travels to India to work with orphanages and people with disabilities. Closer to home, he has a program called Cleft Bears, which sends teddy bears to children born with cleft, in addition to supporting them in various ways. Recently, Dehal became CEO of the Cleft Prevention International Foundation, which is aimed at educating women and families around the world to decrease the prevalence of cleft lip and palate anomalies by implementing prevention programs based on education and research.



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ning. Those services justify the fees.”

While service is at the core of Dehal’s practice, his experience in the industry has taught him that there are a few other qualities needed for success.

“I think there are two key things that my experiences have taught me and have shaped me as an advisor,” he says. “They are hard skills – having a disciplined approach to my investment philosophy and being committed.”

Dehal now takes pride sharing his experience with other advisors. He emphasizes the importance of service, discipline and commitment when he speaks to them, of course, but he also inspires self-belief.

“I always say, ‘Believe in yourself and don’t let anyone discourage you or say you cannot do it,’” he says. “Anything is possible in this business, but you have to be willing to work very hard. Put your sweat into it, work like no one is willing to work, and you will get results that no one is able to get.”

He adds that being a financial advisor has to be a passion, not a job. “I do this for my passion for the industry,” he says. “I get up at 5 a.m. each morning. I meditate for 30 minutes and run for 30 minutes. I get into the office before 8 a.m., and every day I look forward to it. I love what I do and can’t wait to arrive each day.” **WP**

FAST FACTS: MICHAEL DEHAL



PRACTICE

Dehal Investment Partners



FIRM

Raymond James



LOCATION

Toronto



YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY

20



CERTIFICATIONS

CPA, CMA, CIM



EDUCATION

Bachelor of commerce from McMaster University and MBA from Queen's University



SPECIALTIES

Private client wealth management (including discretionary portfolio management), cross-border wealth management, institutional cash management