



**The Client:** Debbie Cook, manager of corporate administration, Enbridge Inc.

**The Business:** Enbridge Inc.,  
3000, 425 1 St. S.W.

**Amount of Space:** Before expansion,  
120,000 square feet, after expansion,  
140,000 square feet

**Number of Employees:** 300 in Calgary

**The Problem:** No room to grow in the current space, and a need to stay downtown, in close contact with clients

**The Solution:** Consulting with employees to determine the best way to use new space

**The Expert:** Georgi Sizeland, co-founder, Sizeland Evans Interior Design Inc.



Enbridge's new 18th floor workspace.

In the middle of a growth phase that saw acquisitions and expansion of its operations across North America, Enbridge, a corporation that transports and distributes energy, was running short of room. Even with the cost and scarcity of downtown real estate, leaving the core was simply not an option. "Everyone we deal with is downtown," says Debbie Cook, Enbridge's manager of corporate administration, adding that rents are not necessarily that much cheaper for larger companies outside of the downtown core.

With over 300 employees in Calgary, Enbridge takes up a lot of space. Despite having six floors of a 35-storey office building for a total of 120,000 square feet, the company saw the looming need for expansion. "We still needed more space, so we snapped up the 18th floor before someone else could," Cook says. The company officially took over the space in October of 2005.

The addition of over 19,000 square feet accommodates 66 employees, and the design is very much a departure from the usual Enbridge offices, which to this point had been walled-in workspaces. Seven Enbridge employees formed a committee to work with Sizeland Evans, an interior design and project management firm, to create an appealing and functional design. Together, they concocted the company's first open-floor plan which included a few perks, like flat panel monitors and wireless headsets. This helped make the transition easier for Enbridge, as the employees moving into the new space had some ownership in it.

Taking advantage of the open space, Sizeland suggested that versatile furniture be used, such as tables on wheels, so that the room could be quickly changed to accommodate new needs. Sizeland also created "break-away rooms," essentially a series of sliding glass doors that, when open, create a larger office, and when closed present a private space for an office or a boardroom.

"There's just so much room for collaboration," Cook says. "And there's lots of sunlight, with the best furniture and best lighting plan imaginable."

Another novel idea was to incorporate a couple of telephone booths – small workstations enclosed with doors to give employees privacy while making phone calls or simply a place that is quiet and peaceful to work in.

"(Sizeland) took our needs and extrapolated on them to create the ideal space," says Cook, adding, "They really know our company and our culture and how we think, so they knew exactly what to bring to the table."

Georgi Sizeland, a co-founder of Sizeland Evans, says it's important for her company to fully comprehend its client's needs.

"We go through an interview and analysis program, taking inventory of what a client has and what they need," she says. "We discuss what they have that works for them and what doesn't, learning about their goals and their culture." ■

— With files from Kyra Hogan

## Georgi Sizeland's office space tips and tricks:

- **Keep things as mobile as you can** so the company can quickly and easily alter the space to suit new needs. Mobility and flexibility mean you need less stuff—for example, a table on wheels means that just one, not several, is required. This allows staff to spread out their work and collaborate with one another.
- **Keep the furniture on a small scale** to save space. Look up while creating storage and filing space – there's likely plenty of unused vertical space. Also, make multi-functional rooms – for example, the boardroom can be used for training, brainstorming sessions and as a lunchroom.
- Instead of having several small coffee areas tucked away in corners, **centralize space** – one coffee area, one photocopying space, and so on. It saves on space and promotes synergy by getting staff chatting with one another as they copy a report or pour cream into coffee.

**Georgi Sizeland**, co-founder,  
Sizeland Evans Interior Design Inc.