

Baker McKenzie

CLIENT STORY

Legal
Toronto, ON



70%

70% of employers have improved their physical environments to encourage healthy behaviors.¹

A growing number of employers are defining workplace health as a central part of company culture and strategy. Reshaping the physical environment to encourage healthy behavior includes adding healthy foods to breakrooms and restaurant delivery menus, ergonomic workstations, and appropriate lighting.

While much of the conversation around open-office arrangements center on the technology industry, the impact of the collaborative workplace is felt within more traditional offices as well.

Such was the case for Baker McKenzie's Toronto-based law office. Specializing in areas that include data and technology, environment and climate change, intellectual property, and antitrust and competition, they wanted to add a third floor to their office which would mimic the work environment of their clientele, thus the renovation of the 27th floor in their building.



*Baker McKenzie
wanted to align their
workspace with those
that their clients
were already familiar
with, so more open,
more collaborative
[workspaces]."*

NATALIA SAMETZ
INTERIOR DESIGNER, LDB



The 'Innovation Hub' was created to support the type of work they wanted to promote on this new floor. Instead of the traditional rows of closed-door office spaces around the periphery that is often seen in law offices, the Innovation Hub centers the private offices while providing an open-office floor plate, additional video conferencing rooms, and two privacy telephone booths. "It was the complete opposite to what their other two floors are like," explained Lucia De Biasio, Principal at LDB Design Inc.

"Their other two floors are very typical legal-type floors: offices on the outside, very insular, and with opaque glazing so you can't see into the offices, but they couldn't see out either. When you are walking through the space you don't really know which corner of the office you are in because it's all very similar. When we approached [this project], they wanted to have a completely different look [for the third floor]." She continued, "They really wanted to be the leaders in how a law firm could lay themselves out".

Natalia Sametz, Registered Interior Designer with LDB who worked on the project, added, "Baker McKenzie wanted to align their workspace with those that their clients were already familiar working within, so more open, more collaborative, as opposed to a pretty strict linear chain of command [that you would find] in a typical law firm."

Bringing the closed-door offices to the interior of the floor, LDB outfitted the open-office space with height-adjustable desking systems and lower privacy panels, allowing for better sight lines throughout the floor. Conference rooms were upgraded with state-of-the-art video conferencing technology to accommodate off-site meetings, and two phone booth rooms were added to provide additional privacy.

"The meeting rooms were pulled off successfully, especially with the height-adjustable meeting tables" explained Sametz. "We outfitted those rooms with counter height stools. Those rooms are the ones I see most often in use. In the collaboration zone, we set up [Allsteel] Rise units that could be moved around by users, so it's a hackable space for them."

"Baker McKenzie wanted to have a completely different look [for the third floor]. They really wanted to be the leaders in how a law firm could lay themselves out."

LUCIA DE BIASIO
PRINCIPAL, LDB



PROJECT DETAILS

Corporate Office
-27th Floor-
12,375 sq. ft.
Toronto, ON
45 Employees

Partnerships
NUA Office Inc.
LDB Design Inc.

PRODUCT SOLUTIONS

Seating

Clarity®, Linger™, Rise™,
Retreat™, Scooch™,
Gunlocke Convo™,
HBF Dialogue, HBF Conexus

Workspaces

Approach™, Optimize™,
Gunlocke Silea™

Tables

Aware®, Altitude®,
Gunlocke Briefing™, HBF Triscape

Storage

Align™, Essentials™, Involve®

Accessories

Pivot™, Gunlocke Briefing™
Hospitality Cart

But the Innovation Hub didn't completely break from Baker McKenzie's previous lawyer-esque aesthetic. Where real wood wasn't used for desk and storage systems, wood laminate was used to mimic the company's material choices. By using wood laminate, the aesthetic of the Innovation Hub was better able to blend into that of the other floors while utilizing a budget-friendly and low-maintenance wood alternative.



¹ www.forbes.com