



From left: **Carla Kolody**, **Shivi Thusoo**, **Gerry de Leeuw**, **Chantal Corcuera** and **Stephen Lefebvre**.

Devon Canada Corporation

A culture of empowerment

Calgary's
Best Places
to Work
2007:
Oil & Gas

AFTER SEVERAL LARGE MERGERS, and now facing one of the tightest labour markets in North America, Devon Canada Corporation has been able to retain an entrepreneurial culture. Business units operate autonomously from — yet in collaboration with — management. "The flat management style allows ideas to run independently," says Shivi Thusoo, a corporate safety adviser at Devon.

One employee even makes the drive each day from Nanton just because of the culture, which is commonly cited as a reason for choosing Devon — and staying. The company matches savings plan contributions, donates to charities on behalf of every employee, is routinely one of the largest contributors per capita annually to the United Way, and is flexible

Services: Devon is an oil and gas exploration and production company most active in Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C.

Number of Employees: 827 full-time in Calgary, plus 527 field employees.

Key Employee Benefits: 12 flex days, savings plan contributions are matched up to four per cent, health spending account, on-site showers and free bike lock-ups, an entrepreneurial culture, community contributions, and flexible work hours.

Why it's a Best Place to Work: Devon has retained a small-company attitude despite substantial growth through mergers over the past few years, affording employees ownership of their jobs and an emphasis on flexible policies that greatly enhance work/life balance.

in its approach to management and work hours. "The way we win is our entrepreneurial environment and being really flexible about how we set things up," says Gerry de Leeuw, vice-president of exploration.

As Thusoo says with a chuckle: "We're given enough rope to hang ourselves with, but there's always a senior manager to put the stool back underneath and get you out of the noose." His point is that Devon is willing to empower employees to take smart risks and innovate. Its Access Devon online centre offers opportunities to enrol in one of many courses, from financial planning to skills upgrading.

At Devon, compensation is competitive with industry, and bonuses linked to performance are paid out annually. The company's location, next to the YMCA and Eau Claire, is ideal. Golfing sessions and events such as bowling are nice perks, but the main reason employees seem to stay is because of the culture. "To ingrain flexibility into your culture takes a lot more [effort] than what's out there in the market," says Thusoo. "And Devon has taken the time to make that happen."

— Derek Sankey

Calgary's Best Places to Work 2007 Honourable Mention: Oil & Gas Demon Oilfield Services Inc.

"This is a small start-up business that has all of the values that pull great people together. People are treated with respect that they deserve right from the welder to the senior tester. Demon is turning people away when other companies are struggling to fill coveralls." — *Demon employee*

Calgary's Best Places to Work 2007 Honourable Mention: Oil & Gas Opti Canada Inc.

"I find Opti Canada an open and excellent place to work. I feel that I contribute and that the company recognizes me for it. They have treated me well both in terms of compensation and recognition. I know that I will be with this organization for the next five years and more." — *Opti Canada employee*