

Making the Leap: From Corporate HR to Training & Development Company Founder

Catherine Buday (EIX and FamilyBusiness.org)

KEYWORDS: How to grow your business, How to start a business.

[Link to video](#)

Know your niche; don't charge less than your competitors; decide whether to grow or keep things simple; and avoid projects that could hurt your brand.

Christy Kahana worked many years in Human Resources for large and small biotech and medical device companies in the Boston area, when two things happened. She began noticing that former colleagues were launching their own startups and needed help training and developing their employees; and her twin children were at an age when they needed her more.

After months of meticulous planning and prospecting with those former colleagues and other connections, Christy went out on her own. She eventually founded Claria Partners, a training and talent development company catering to the biotech industry. In this interview for EIX's "Making the Leap" series, she talks about her decision to leave the corporate world; how she prepared to pull the plug and attracted her first clients; her decision to hire a staff so she could grow, instead of staying solo; and how she and her husband handled things financially when she quit salaried work shortly after they moved into a new home.

She also shares her advice for others considering making the leap from a steady paycheck to the uncertain world of business ownership. Some big takeaways: Do a lot of thinking about your niche and lay the groundwork with future clients before you launch. Don't be afraid to charge the going rate for your profession. Finally, don't take on projects outside your wheelhouse even if you are worried about money; in the long run, this will hurt your brand.

