

# Making the Leap: From Tech Freelancer to Employer

Catherine Buday (EIX and FamilyBusiness.org)

John Eckhardt (Code Pros)

**KEYWORDS:** human resources, How to start a business, Entrepreneurship, Making the Leap.

John Eckhardt was a sought-after freelance tech consultant. To grow, he had to step back from what came naturally and hire and manage others.

[Link to video](#)

**Explore the entire "Making the Leap" series**  
(<https://eiexchange.com/content/New-series-making-the-leap-to-entrepreneurship>)

Since John Eckhardt was nine years old, programming has come as naturally as breathing. Soon after graduating college he became a freelance tech consultant, and had no problem finding clients.

But eventually, he found that he couldn't grow his business and help more clients without hiring and managing others. So he founded [Code Pros](https://codepros.biz/about/), (<https://codepros.biz/about/>) a Minneapolis-based firm that specializes in helping clients become more efficient without replacing their outdated legacy software.

Transitioning from freelancer to company owner wasn't easy, because Eckhardt had to step back from doing work that he knew and loved and manage others who would do it. "People who start businesses are often good at doing 'the thing,'" he says. "But a business is much more than that...It's finding projects and people, Human Resources, and doing the books."

One scary aspect was making sure that the business took in enough revenue to pay four employees. At times Eckhardt himself went without an income for several months and questioned whether he was doing the right thing.

In this interview, Eckhardt shares how he made everything work. The keys are doing your homework, being aggressive about pursuing projects, and having a vision bigger than yourself. "Don't jump in blindly," he says, "but don't let fear stop you."

