

Professional Development Business and Entrepreneurship Practice Management

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# The Ideal Exit: How to Retire on Your Terms

Five exit strategies every eye surgery practice owner should know

By Rod Solar | 2/25/2025 | 5 min read



## 1. Exit the line

The first step is moving from being the “solopreneur” performing every task to managing a team that handles patient care. You’ve likely taken a few steps through this exit already (by hiring an admin assistant, a telephone receptionist, or an optometrist). However, you’re still working *in the business instead of on the business*. The rule here is that if someone else can do it, hire them. This mindset shift lets you focus less on the daily grind and more on strategy, marketing, and scaling your business. It’s the foundation for building a practice that doesn’t rely on you for survival. You achieve this exit strategy through effective delegation.

## 2. Exit the staff

Next, you build a leadership team and implement systems to keep the practice running smoothly without your constant oversight. This is the most impactful exit you can make while still in the business. This is when you step fully into the CEO role – not just in title, but in function. A true CEO operates on the business. With a clear scalable operating system in place, you can delegate key responsibilities to your leadership team, allowing you to focus on growth and expansion. The test for this exit strategy is that you can leave the business for 30 consecutive days while your business continues to grow without you present. As the CEO, you are responsible for steering the business forward toward the vision you’ve established – your team makes it a reality.

## 3. Exit the organizational chart

Some practice owners enjoy staying involved but don’t want to deal with day-to-day operations. In this stage, you step away from running the business but remain engaged as a strategic advisor or board member. This lets you maintain influence while freeing up your time for other pursuits, whether developing a new business line, mentoring others, or simply enjoying your life outside of work. To achieve this exit, you need an operator (a Chief Operating Office [COO] or a General Manager) who manages your operations. You no longer have a job title and now sit on the board. Yes, you need a board. A board is just a fancy word for having a team of advisors who bring to the table what you don’t (knowledge, relationships, and experience). That said, you might remain CEO, and still care about the business more than anyone else.

## 4. Exit governance

This stage involves stepping back from even advisory roles, transitioning into an investor who benefits from the success of the business without any governance responsibilities. Here, you reap the rewards of dividends, distributions, and financial freedom while trusting the systems and leadership team you’ve built to keep the business thriving. You are now a passive investor. Now, you are *above the business*. Your current product or service is *the business*, not eye surgery.

## 5. Exit ownership

Finally, the most well-known exit: selling your business entirely. Whether it’s to a private equity group, another surgeon, or a larger healthcare network, this step allows you to cash in on the value you’ve built and move on to your next chapter – whether that’s retirement, starting a new venture, or simply enjoying the fruits of your labour. Entrepreneurship is a journey filled with highs and lows, but few moments are as rewarding as taking your practice to the next level.

That’s precisely what happened for one of my clients, a visionary refractive surgeon who recently accomplished two significant milestones: making a key hire and upgrading their practice’s operational systems. These steps marked their official transition from practitioner to truly leading their business as CEO, setting the stage for even greater success.

For many practice owners, stepping back from the chair or preparing to exit their business feels overwhelming. However, understanding the five exits of the entrepreneur can help you align your actions with your long-term goals. Below, I’ll break down the five exit strategies every eye surgery entrepreneur should consider – and how each one paves the way toward the freedom you’ve worked so hard to achieve.

### Which exit strategy is right for you?

Over the next 12 to 18 months, which of these exits would set you up for the freedom and success you envision? Note, you can’t skip the first three steps and receive the greatest potential value for your business when you take exit number 5.

The path you choose will depend on your goals, your vision for your practice, and your desired lifestyle. I’ve designed my [Scale & Exit Program](#) to help eye surgery entrepreneurs double their revenue, triple their profits, and achieve their ideal exit in three years or less.

Owning your practice gives you the freedom to grow as much – or as little – as you want. With the right guidance and support, you can achieve an exit that reflects your hard work and sets you up for a future of choice and freedom.

Ready to map out your ideal exit? Let’s build the roadmap together.

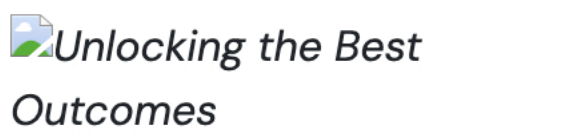
## About the Author(s)

### Rod Solar

Rod Solar is Director of Practice Development at LiveseySolar, London, UK and a Scalable Business Advisor

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