

Why Did WeWork's Adam Neumann "Flee" From New York?

January 2, 2020 3 min read

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This was not a great year for WeWork's ex-CEO, Adam Neumann. In 2019, the co-working giant's co-founder and evangelist found himself in big trouble with his shareholders after allegations of erratic behavior and drug use became public. Because of Neumann's questionable activities, and other financial red flags, the company was forced to withdraw its IPO bid in September. Neumann was forced to resign and now faces lawsuits and the potential loss of a large buyout from the firm's most significant stakeholder, SoftBank.

So if you were Neumann and you built a company into a multi-billion-dollar organization, only to have everything fall to pieces on the cusp of cashing in, what would you do? How about ... going away! To escape the "negative energy" of New York, Neumann and his wife reportedly pulled their kids from their school in Manhattan and just started, well, "jetting around," a source told the *New York Post*. According to the article, Neumann – a well-known big spender – has "several lavish residences in and around Manhattan, as well as on the West Coast." The family has reportedly been spotted in South America and Israel, among other places.

Considering the money he's lost and the lawsuits he faces, I think it's safe to say that the problems of a typical business owner (i.e. you and I) likely pale in comparison to the headaches Neumann faces when he ultimately comes home. And although I'm not a big fan of Neumann's business practices, I

am admiring of one thing: his escape.

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That's because, for someone running a business, getting away – for whatever reason – is critical. The smartest business owners I know make it a requirement of the job. For example, every January, a client of mine who owns a roofing company in New Jersey takes two weeks off and goes scuba diving with his family in Barbados. Another client, a restaurant owner, has a beach house in Delaware where he spends the entire month of August. And the owner of a landscaping company near me uses the winter slowdown to go skiing every weekend.

Like Neumann, these people escape the negative energy too. They change their scenery. They put distance between themselves and their businesses, their problems, their headaches. They allow all that negative energy that has built up over time to dissipate in the waters of the Caribbean or the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. They make getting away a priority, because they know that it's not only important for them, but for all the people who they deal with over the course of a year.

So as we head into 2020, or any new year, it's important for us all to do what Adam Neumann does. OK ... not most of the things he does. I'm just talking about one very important thing: getting away.

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