

Addison Lee CEO Liam Griffin on fighting Uber, going back on early retirement and London's driver shortage

To anyone dreaming of quitting the sweaty commute and daily grind for a life of holidays, sport, and never working again, Liam Griffin says: don't do it.

His family sold [Addison Lee](#) for £300 million in 2013, with Griffin staying on at the cab firm until he fell out with its private equity buyers Carlyle in 2015. He then retired, aged 42.

Five years of travelling, angel investing, property development, triathlons and Ironman followed – “all those things for when you've got lots of spare time” – before he realised: “I missed work.”

“Early [retirement](#) means you miss your sense of purpose,” he says. “During that time I read every self-help book going – it's not all happiness and light to be sat at home at 42 with no job.”

Griffin has spent his career in cabs, starting with childhood summer holidays in the tiny Battersea [minicab](#) office of Addison Lee, the business his dad founded in 1975, where “I'd price dockets, fix radios, anything, really.” He joined the firm after graduating from Loughborough University, taking over as CEO from his father, John, in 2006.

Addison Lee's sale in 2013 was not about the money, Griffin claims, but expansion. He wanted to take Addison Lee to the US and across the UK.

“Then [Uber](#) came on the radar. And Carlisle pulled the plug on all of our ambitions.”