

Essay 29 - Embrace the World of Digital

Alas ... the World before Digital! You may fondly recall. I remember the early 90s. If I was bored I would tell my Mum that I would be out for a few hours* and I would go off on my red *BMX Macho*. What freedom! I would hit a tennis ball against the wall. Walk down to Banstead Village for the sweetie shop. If it was raining I would sit on our lounge floor and construct an *Action Force* base using cardboard, colouring pens, scissors, sellotape and glue. Today kids are not using glue**... they are glued to their screens. Perhaps this is because the parents are too busy glued to their smart phones. What sticky world will our children inherit with all this screen gluing? I feel the world will suffer more devastating wars towards the end of this century as humans by then (if not already) would have lost the basic skill that they learnt in the jungle millions of years ago ... *verbal communication*.

Before *googling* Digital I thought I had a grasp of what it meant ...

Digital describes electronic technology that generates, stores, and processes data in terms of two states: positive and non-positive.

The Digital Age is otherwise referred to as ...

The Information Age, a historic period in the 21st century characterized by the rapid shift from traditional industry that the Industrial Revolution brought through industrialization, to an economy based on information technology.

I was really surprised to find out that the World Wide Web started in 1993, when I was making cardboard *Action Force* bases! If I am honest I was very slow to embrace all things Digital. I suppose I had a *Casio* watch as a child, even a calculator that drew graphs at A-Level, but at University I think I regressed. In the first year I recall hand writing essays. And in the final year (2004) I remember using the internet for the first time using a *Yahoo* search to research the biomedical website *PubMed*. Using computers and technology; I found it all very uncomfortable.

*On my own. What has changed these days that kids can't do that? Or is it Parental evolution?

**The older ones are.

In my Business, kicking and screaming I have finally embraced the world of Digital. Gone are the 10am to 4pm every day ‘Cold Calls.’ Replaced by digital sales work, through Social Media (mainly *LinkedIn*) and Email Marketing. Our website now has 100 URLs! With the advent of *Microsoft Teams* (and *Shit-Vid**) every week I meet Health & Safety Professionals which I find really builds trust in me**, my Business and our Products and Services. I now have a Digital Caricature***! And so does *Emma!*



We now have a Digital Products Ecosystem**** which I must be honest, may not have existed to the extent it does if *Shit-Vid* didn't happen. Am I part of The Elites? So let me get to the crux of *Essay 29 - Embrace the World of Digital*. Let's first look at Digital forms of Manual Handling Training.

Online Manual Handling Training Programmes

Online Training (also known as E-Learning) is an increasingly popular option for many Businesses nowadays due to its quick purchase and easy access. Online Training provides a simple, flexible and interactive Training experience for employees. I was slow to action Digital Manual Handling Products at *Osteopathic Solutions Ltd*. I really was. But ... why? Well, I wanted to stick to my Manual Handling values. That training your Workforce should be practical. Task specific. In the real working environments. And of course it should be. You may already use Programmes from Online Course providers, and I would be interested to know what results you have had with them. Did they change habits? Have you had reductions in Lost Time Accidents and Injury at Work Claims? If you haven't, what was the problem? Was the Online Course produced by a Jack of All Trades? Did it contain no Video content of Manual Handling value? Was there no Assessment at the end of it? So Learners didn't feel the need to ... you guessed it ... Learn.

*Check out *Essay 42 - Jump off the #Scamdemic Bandwagon*.

**There is no reason to mistrust.

***I even have the same amount of hair now as my caricature! Thanks to Turkey :)

*****Ecosystem* ... that's *Daniel Priestley's* word, not mine.

There are of course 100s of Online Programmes 'out there'. Before you purchase I strongly recommend **you re-read *Essay 10 from Sorry! We're Closed***. Don't let yourself get 'abducted' by a Jack of all Trades.

iHasco Exposed - The Truth about their Manual Handling Training

iHasco brand themselves as 'a market-leading UK provider of interactive online training solutions.' Their Online Manual Handling Programme has been very popular. With this, we bought* it at £27.50 for one user. Myself.

With any Health, Safety and Wellbeing Training Programme, with recommendations, teachings and advice that will be put into practice by the people who view it, the producer of that Programme should seek the appropriate guidance from Subject Experts. *iHasco* failed in their responsibility. If you were putting a Programme out there would you hire a Radio Presenter as the Manual Handling Instructor? That's what *iHasco* did. The *iHasco* Programme focuses on lifting. There is very little mention of pushing and pulling. The Radio Presenter demonstrates a lift of a box from the ground. Some call her practice the 'leg lift'. It involves the feet hip width apart, fully locking the knees with her right heel coming off the floor. Her neck is bent backwards as she looks forward during the lifting phase. All a very distasteful recipe for neck and lower back muscle spasms, crippling knee osteoarthritis and unsightly foot bunions. There are demonstrations of supposed best practice lifting with spinal twisting. Yes, you just read that sentence right. Shocking. *iHasco* even confuse the Learner by contradicting their squat lifting 'teaching' with the Radio Presenter having her feet in a more optimal position, yet with no basic technical description. See for yourself. Feel free to review my hyper-credible and complete appraisal of the *iHasco* Manual Handling Programme. Google '*Osteopathic Solutions Blogs*'. It's jaw-dropping. What's more worrying is that it's RoSPA and IOSH approved.

If there was a Government Body that could strike off this Programme or better still *iHasco* and their owning company Citation, then there should be. They should stick to providing their other Courses like '*Delivering Bad News*'.

*Note: With the publishing of our *iHasco* exposé (followed by their desperate attempts to get it removed from the internet) their Directors would have pressed Control-Alt-Delete and using the intelligence gathered, likely consulting a Physical Therapist along the way, they would have constructed an Online Programme with improved biomechanics of Manual Handling techniques. If they didn't ... OMG!

Here are the Benefits of (Expert produced) Online Manual Handling Training:

- It manages Training records & therefore reduces administration overheads
- It is commonly laptop/ mobile/ tablet friendly therefore allowing easy access from a range of onsite locations
- It is highly interactive & visual with informative Videos making it easily remembered
- Employees can learn at their own pace. There is no time limit
- Many languages are available for employees with little or no English speaking skills
- The employee gets access to an instant printable Certificate on completion
- E-Learning solutions are generally more cost effective
- Each & every Learner receives the exact same level of Training. This is particularly useful in ensuring compliance, measuring skills & for mandatory Training such as Induction Training

Manual Handling Training Videos

I can see what images you have in your mind's eye. A dated, produced 20 years ago, grainy 'production' with some Jack of All Trades waffling on monotone about Manual Handling. A bit like my namesake *Gareth Keenan* from the classic 2001 Comedy *The Office* who delivers his Health & Safety Masterclass* demonstrating how not to lift a box and how to '*bend the knees and keep the back straight.*'



*Put your copy of *Sorry! We're Closed* down, insert your bookmark on this page and watch https://youtu.be/QdIZ_gezPvk If this link no longer exists, google '*Gareth Keenan's Health and Safety Masterclass The Office*'. Simply hilarious and so painfully cringey!

In 2020, when I produced *Osteopathic Solutions* 'Off the Shelf*' Manual Handling Training DVD, I was shocked at how bad the UK's offerings were. So shocked that I wrote my Expert Appraisal on the following Manual Handling Training Video Productions:

- 1). Safety Media
- 2). Child's Play
- 3). Ainscough Training
- 4). Back to Basics
- 5). Safetycare
- 6). Qualtec
- 7). Trainer Courses
- 8). 8 Basic Steps to Correct Lifting Technique
- 9). Manual Handling Movie by Ray Scanlon
- 10). Marsden Fire Safety
- 11). Lifting Objects at Work
- 12). Ocean Group Training
- 13). 6 Steps to Safe Manual Handling
- 14). Channel 1 Creative Media

If you have purchased one of these very average (and that's being very kind) Videos, and still use it, I beg of you to immediately put your copy of *Sorry! We're Closed* down and email me for its Appraisal at gareth@osteopathicsolutions.uk With this I can only hope you ditch its use and purchase an Expert's product.

I hear you say ... *"Hang on Gareth, didn't you say we should be Embracing the World of Digital?"*

My answer ... *"Are you talking to me or Gareth Keenan?"*

An Expert produced Manual Handling Training DVD Video has the same benefits as an Online Programme, and additionally is hugely lower in cost compared to an Online Programme (with its individual 'User' costs) and Workforce Practical Training in the working environments. A small, one-off fee for an Expert 'Off the Shelf' product that can be used indefinitely.

*You can't buy it from your local Newsagent.

Whether you are embracing the World of Digital via an Online Programme or a DVD Video it doesn't matter much. It's about the Expert content, and here's what Learning Outcomes this Expert content will give your employees:

- Attendees will understand their responsibility within the Manual Handling Operations Regulations
- Attendees will understand the effects of Manual Handling Lost Time Accidents & the personal consequences of Back Injury involving symptoms & physical disability
- Attendees will obtain a basic knowledge & understanding of simple anatomy & biomechanics of the spine
- Attendees will understand how Musculoskeletal Disorders are caused in their working environment through their natural practice of hazardous lifting, carrying, lowering, pushing, pulling & team handling
- Attendees will obtain an enhanced postural awareness
- Attendees will be competent in Optimal lifting, carrying, lowering, pushing, pulling, team handling techniques & practices in their working environment
- Attendees will be able to apply Optimal Manual Handling techniques & practices to awkward loads in their working environment
- Attendees will be able to critique biomechanically flawed techniques & practices taught in previous Manual Handling Training
- Attendees will reduce the likelihood of suffering a Manual Handling Injury at Work

Just one thing about bullet point 6 above. What word jumps out to you?

Definitions of *competent* include ...

- 1). *Having the necessary ability, knowledge, or skill to do something successfully.*
- 2). *Acceptable and satisfactory, though not outstanding.*

Concerning Digital Manual Handling Training I will be honest and I hope you appreciate this honesty, you can't really expect your employees to be *competent* in Optimal Manual Handling techniques from watching a screen, can you? Therefore from Digital Training, as long as it was from an Expert I feel the second definition applies more with *satisfactory* jumping out to me.

Unlike *The Office* Gareth Keenan's 'tick the box' Health & Safety Training Masterclass, please don't think Online Manual Handling Programmes and Video Training are 'tick box' procedures. If I was your Business' CEO and Founder, and with them knowing from your Expert information (as the Health & Safety Professional) that it is law to provide Training, what with the Business financial repercussions of **not** providing Workforce Training, if I was them, the employee would **not** be allowed to lift a pen without having attended a Manual Handling Course, with evidence of.



Issues with Practical Workforce Training

Of course I concur with the HSE that Workforce Manual Handling Training should be in the working environment. Here are some of the issues from my experience of delivering Practical Training:

1). Workforce Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

It wouldn't be very prudent to have an employee attend a Practical Course if they were suffering from an existing MSD, especially an acute one. Practical Courses should be, you guessed it ... highly practical! Therefore there may be a lot of lugging heavy stuff around. Unfortunately unless you have read *Essay 20* and *Promoted a Communication Culture* employees don't like to be honest about what aches and pains they are suffering from. Therefore what you can get is employees informing the Instructor at the start of the Practical Course that '*I can't do any practical, Boss!*' With this, the Instructor is put in a difficult position and what I have done is say to them (after briefly questioning them what the MSD is) to just observe.

2). Language Barrier

I remember delivering Practical Training for the *Sorry! We're Closed ... Southern Salads* in Kent with the majority of the employees being those you would see in the evening eating at their favourite Nepalese restaurant ... being Gurkhas. You know? Those who fought so valiantly for Great Britain in the 2nd World War.* I remember thinking to myself whilst freezing my t*ts off in the chilled warehouse “*What a waste of time this Training is. They can't understand a word I am saying!*”

3). Concentration Levels

“*Just observe.*” The end to point 1). The problem is as an Instructor you can't watch everybody during a Practical Course. You are demonstrating and when you aren't you are observing an individual's *competency*. So many times I have had to politely ask attendees to ‘attend’ and put their phone in their pocket or stop their conversation about the footie or what's on TV tonight.

Other Ways of Embracing the World of Digital

This includes reading Blogs, Articles and Case Studies. Watching Vlogs and Explainer Videos. Listening to Podcasts. But being mindful that these Digital forms of information should only be used when they are of true value to you in your role.

And as I finish writing *Essay 29 - Embrace the World of Digital ...* it is 7.30pm on Tuesday 6th September 2022, I will now turn off my computer and screen. I will sit down on the couch with my mobile in my right hand and the TV remote in the other ... **fully embraced!**

* Nearly 30,000 Gurkhas (or I would call them Human Beings) were killed or wounded in the 2nd World War. Why were they fighting for Great Britain? Shocking statistic.

Exercises

- Digitally connect with me by *Microsoft Teams* or *WhatsApp* for an Appraisal of your Manual Handling DVD Video and/ or Online Programme.
- Digitally connect with me in a site walkaround observing your Manual Handling tasks, loads and environments.
- Digitally connect with me and 3 other Health & Safety Professionals on my Manual Handling Q&As run every Friday at 3pm. Check out *Essay 48* for more information.

Web Pages to Research

Check out our '*of True Value to you personally and in your role*' Blogs, Articles, Case Studies, Vlogs, Explainer Videos and ***The Pain Free Podcast*** on www.osteopathicsolutions-manualhandling.co.uk

For *Osteopathic Solutions*' Expert Digital Manual Handling Training Products including DigiTrain®, our DVD/ USB Box Sets and Videos; go to www.osteopathicsolutions-manualhandling.co.uk/products

Check out my insightful Blogs "***IHASCO Exposed - The Truth about their Manual Handling Training***" and "***The UK's Negligent Online Manual Handling Training Programmes Exposed***"
www.osteopathicsolutions-manualhandling.co.uk/osteopathic-solutions-blogs

Your systems don't allow DVDs and USBs to play Videos? Our Client *Google Drive* Folder solves that!

Email or *LinkedIn* DM me to find out more. Well you have ***Embraced the World of Digital!***