

# *Sorry! We're Closed*

**Gareth Milner**

Leverage Business Growth with Expert  
Manual Handling Risk Management

I'd like to dedicate this book to my parents *Carol* and *Peter Milner* for their sacrifices in giving me my education. Myself for giving me my Osteopathy degree (well, self love is everywhere these days isn't it). To *Daniel Priestley* for stimulating me to write it. And to *Emma* for helping to bring light into my life.

I hope that the ideas in this book assist you in creating a Business that works for everyone.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gareth founded *Osteopathic Solutions Ltd* in 2010 in Surrey at the age of 28. Between the years of 2000 and 2004 he studied Osteopathy in the Bachelor of Science Honours Degree at the *European School of Osteopathy* in Maidstone, Kent. In the summer of 2004 he graduated.

As a Registered Osteopath, patients consulted him at clinics across Surrey including the *Banstead Village Clinic*, in the beloved village that he grew up.

His career in Osteopathy was stopped in its tracks in 2006, as due to an accident a few years prior, he suffered a serious neck injury where the C5/C6 disc was severely herniated, causing spinal nerve compression. To date Gareth has never practised again due to this injury. Osteopathy lost a bright light in its profession.

With the need to pay off much student debt, Gareth changed industry and went into Financial Services as a Mortgage & Life Insurance Broker. This 1 year experience didn't work out, but it gave Gareth invaluable skills in sales and marketing as well as confidence, and a no fear attitude to sell Professional Services over the phone.

In 2007 Gareth commenced working in Manual Handling Risk Management with the Surrey based business *Osteopaths for Industry Ltd*. 3 and a half productive years were spent supporting its Director in the Business' development. But Gareth knew this type of business could be done better.

In 2010, *Osteopathic Solutions Ltd* was incorporated with the view to have an Osteopathy clinic and a bolt on Manual Handling Risk Management Business. This attempt to restart his Osteopathy career failed due to the neck injury, and thereafter started Gareth's journey towards being the leading figure in his industry that he is now, as the Director of *Osteopathic Solutions Ltd* and Manual Handling Risk Management Expert.



# INTRODUCTION

So what's *Sorry! We're Closed* all about? Business Owner, I'm talking to you first. Take a look at the front cover. In the words of *Catchphrase's Roy Walker* 'Say what you see!'

## Is this what you saw Business Owner?

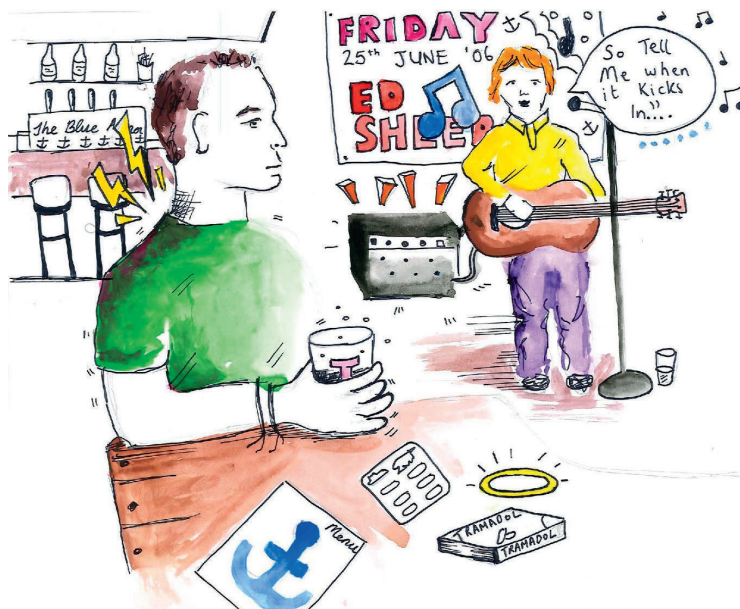
Ok, I see a Factory operative. He's lifting a heavy box. He's stooping and his back goes **CRACK!** He messages his Boss that his back is killing him and he can't come to work. His Boss is apoplectic, as the Factory operative sends him a postcard from his holiday of a lifetime, paid for by his Boss, following a successful Injury at Work Claim, hence the WIN next to the send button! Behind the Boss, there is a reminder '**Don't forget, arrange Manual Handling Training.**' And at the bottom the Boss has gone to *Weight Watchers*, consulted renowned Hair Stylist *Nicky Clarke* and gone blond, grown a nose, and is getting pissed on whilst declaring his Business is closed.

The front cover details a story about Business **Regret**. Let's define *Regret*.

*A feeling of sadness, repentance, or disappointment over an occurrence or something that one has done or failed to do.*

I am a Business Owner, have been since 2010. I know what it's like to make sacrifices and bust a gut to make one's business work. To experience success. To be valued in your industry. To reap the rightful financial rewards. In Business, I understand repentance, disappointment and failure. Just like some of the best Business leaders do, including the Global Entrepreneur *Richard Branson* (we will visit some of *Branson's* business ideas later on). I have written this Book to prevent every UK Business Owner, who busts their gut, from suffering the (potentially *Sorry! We're Closed*) financial effects of failure in Manual Handling Risk Management. I have also written this Book for you; Mr., Mrs. and Ms. Health & Safety Professionals. Amongst your other roles, it is up to YOU to achieve zero workforce musculoskeletal disorders, lost time accidents and Injury at Work Claims, achieving this by raising the Business Owner's awareness to the Manual Handling issues and stimulating their investment, which will leverage Business growth. In this Book I will give you the key to unlocking this.

The year is 2006. I am a 25 year old Registered Osteopath, sitting in the *Blue Anchor Pub* in Tadworth, Surrey. I have a fresh, strong, malty craft beer in hand. I am contemplating giving up my Profession, less than 2 years in. The cervical disc injury I am suffering from every day is draining my every existence. Spinning in my mind is the student debt; the family (of Doctors) embarrassment/ shame; the sense of failure. I have been prescribed Tramadol to ease the pain of my herniated disc that's squeezing on my C6 spinal nerves. 2 pills in my hand, I chuck them down with a hefty glug of my pint, and sit there and wait. The chronic pain was hugely reducing my appetite and with an empty stomach the Tramadol molecules were soon through the stomach barrier and into my bloodstream, whizzing around like energetic ants. And then boom! The dose of Tramadol kicks in. I can literally feel the molecules click into their brain receptors. And there, sitting in my family friendly, local pub, I have discovered narcotics (I can only imagine what Heroin feels like). To my surprise suddenly all around me, people who I had never met, never spoke to, were the nicest people on the planet!



A year later, with no progression and only worsening of my daily pain and disability (even with receiving an Osteopathic treatment programme), I consult *Matthew* the Neurosurgeon at *St. Georges NHS Trust* in South London. He rather '*matter of fact*' describes the neck surgery which starts with an incision in the front of my neck; the muscles, nerves and blood vessels are teased out of the way allowing the high speed burr (of the sound like the one a Dentist uses) to chisel the osteophyte (a pathological bony growth) off the vertebrae; as well as the knife to remove part of my damaged disc. He tells me that there is no guarantee it will dramatically reduce my pain. I ask him one question '*Tetraplegia\**, have you seen it?' He honestly answers '*Yes*'. I stand up, shake his hand, thank him for his time, and quietly leave his office.

Ok, so why have I told you my story? Is it to gain sympathy? Or, so you can keep up your violin practice? In fact, I am ok these days. Sufficient healing has happened. I don't take pain killers and I don't have to park my car next to the supermarket front door.

I have told you my story so you can start to understand the sheer misery and life destruction that a chronic musculoskeletal disorder can do to people's lives. One second ... '*nice fit and suits my style too*' ... that's my '*Heal the World*' Osteopath hat back on. I am passionate about stopping musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) dead in their tracks. I am not talking about those little aches and pains we all get from time to time, especially if you are over 40 like me. I am talking about those MSDs that destroy life quality. The ones that give daily, extreme levels of pain. The ones that make people chronically miserable. The ones that make people take those horrible anti-depressant drugs. The MSDs that stop people doing their favourite life hobbies. Those spinal disc prolapses; those frozen shoulders; those bone on bone osteoarthritic knees; those spinal stenosi (is '*stenosi*' even a word? Think I made that one up). So I am not deemed a Quack by the Medical 'Community', it's spinal stenosis, I will make it singular. Look! They're happy now. Let's get back to passion, and we all like a bit of that don't we? I am so passionate that in 2010 I started a Business with that sole aim of 'Stopping MSDs'. Well ... maybe with one eye on my dream car, the *Toyota GT86* if I am honest.

\*Tetraplegia is a term used to describe the inability to voluntarily move the upper and lower parts of the body. The areas of impaired mobility usually include the fingers, hands, arms, chest, legs, feet and toes and may or may not include the head, neck, and shoulders ... Basically put a gun to your head stuff.

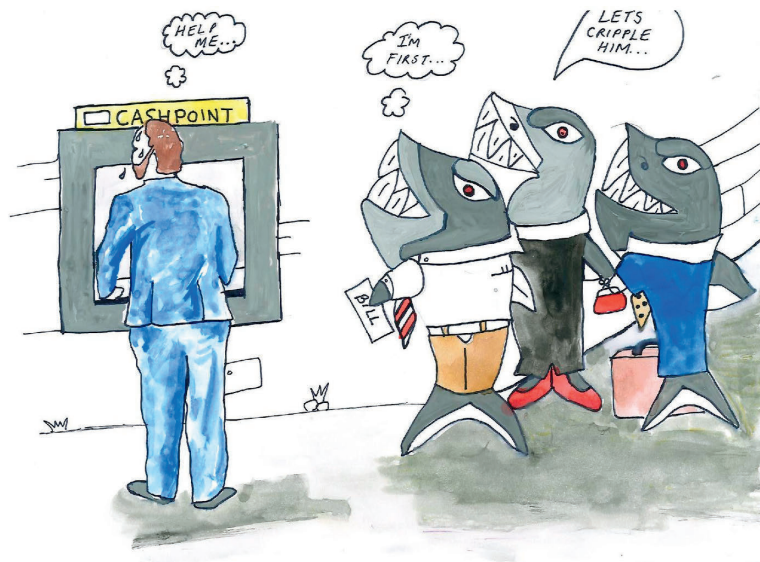


I will take off my 'Heal the World' Osteopath hat now ... and 'Oh, it looks a bit square and rather drab', that's my Business hat back on. After spending a few hours looking around the internet, googling 'Injury at Work Claim' I was shocked how many Legal Sharks there are across the UK, specialising in Injury at Work Claims. With business names like *National Accident Law*, *The Compensation Experts*, *Public Interest Lawyers* (they're not interested in the Public, only themselves). My God! Even the *Royal College of Nursing\** and *Citizens Advice\*\** are getting in on the act. Nobody likes a Legal Shark do they? Well suppose some do; the ones that have procreated with them. You know those Solicitors, Lawyers, Professional Manipulators, Legalised Thieves ... I think I will stop there before they all sue me. I came upon one such Legal Shark (I must add, all the others were no different) called *The Claims Partnership\*\*\** who, and I quote their sharkiness 'We feel confident enough in our skills and experience to say that if it is legally possible to win your claim – then we will win it for you.' That's enough of those types but we will (unfortunately) have to revisit them in **Tip 4 - Beware the Legal Sharks.**

\*[www.rcn.org.uk/Get-Help/Legal-help/Personal-injury](http://www.rcn.org.uk/Get-Help/Legal-help/Personal-injury)

\*\*[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/accidents-at-work](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/accidents-at-work)

\*\*\*[www.theclaimspartnership.co.uk/accidents-at-work/manual-handling-accidents](http://www.theclaimspartnership.co.uk/accidents-at-work/manual-handling-accidents)



Moving on, let's look at why people instigate a 'Personal Injury Claim'. Let's understand each word here.

**'Personal'** ... belonging to or affecting a particular person rather than anyone else.

**'Injury'**\* ... an instance of being injured *and* damage to a person's feelings.

**'Claim'** ... formally request or demand; say that one owns or has earned something.

There is a part of the brain called the Amygdala, which is involved in the processing of emotions, and memories associated with fear. With the words 'Personal' and 'Injury', there's emotions bouncing off of those, don't you agree? And 'Claim'; another word linked to this that springs to my mind is **'Entitlement'** ... *the fact of having a right to something*. And there's the adjective **'Entitled'** ... *believing oneself to be inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment*. There's a lot of entitled people out there, isn't there? Maybe there always has been. We will revisit this shortly, with the Malingerer\*\*.

\*We will review MSDs in *Tip 1 – Educate Yourself about MSDs*

\*\**Tip 5 - Beware the Malingerer*

Have you heard of the concept **Newton's Third Law**? His law states that *'for every action (force) in nature there is an equal and opposite reaction'*. Regarding human behaviour, his laws of physics apply equally to human interaction as they do to physics. We see this in daily life. A child hits a sibling; the sibling hits back. Or screams. Or both. We see it in politics. We see it in Business. Let's look at a Manual Handling example. A Factory employee has a task of kneeling on a table holding material that another colleague is sowing with a machine (this is a real task I have seen recently!). After 10 years of service (with no reasonable pay rises), she suffers from a herniated cervical (neck) disc and cannot work for 2 years due to the pain and disability. She reported neck pain symptoms to her Health & Safety Manager. Nothing to improve the ergonomics of this factory task was done. The Company showed no care. She sues and in Court wins a £150,000 payout. Newton's Third Law in action.



## The Malingerer

The verb *malingering* comes from the French word *malingre*, meaning 'sickly' and one who malingers feigns illness. In its earliest uses in the early 19th century, malingering usually referred to a soldier or sailor pretending to be sick or insane, to shirk duty. As an Osteopath student I learnt a way to detect the Malingerer, regarding lower back pain. We've all heard of Sciatica. You know. Serious pain that shoots down the leg. The most common cause is a herniated or prolapsed lumbar disc. **Patient A** comes to my clinic. A 45 year old factory worker. He presents with a back injury that he says was caused by a lifting incident at work. My case notes state '*the load was too heavy*'. Whilst he is standing I ask him to bend forwards. He screams like a Fox (who like to baffle or deceive) in agony. We then proceed to the treatment couch where I perform a Straight Leg Raise (SLR) i.e. passively raising the leg experiencing the sciatica, and the Fox has gone quiet. After a few other Osteopathic, Orthopaedic and Neurological tests I write in my case notes '*It is most likely that Patient A is malingering.*' The problem is, people can quite easily fake back injuries. One of the problems is a lot of the time they haven't consulted an Expert like an Osteopath or a Chiropractor. They have been signed off solely through their GP. Many times claimants or simply the Entitled (I will give them a capital E as they feel so important) win 20 or 30 thousand pound payouts, and because a lot of back injuries can't be seen (even with modern scans) the non existence of the back injury was hard to prove. **Tip 33 - Grow the Osteopathic Profession** is an important one to read regarding this.



Wrapping up now the intro to *Sorry! We're Closed*. The good old General Practitioner (GP) is a bit of a Jack of all Trades Master of None. They know a little bit, but ... about a lot. I am speaking to you, Health & Safety Professional. I have used the word 'Professional' instead of 'Manager' (boring), Officer (Police?), Adviser (gets paid for not doing much). As you are a Professional being an Expert comes hand in hand. **You want to be an Expert, right?**

I promise you, by reading all of this Book, not once, not twice, but at least three times, you're gonna know exactly how to expertly, professionally, ingeniously, ably, adroitly; ok that's enough expertly synonym adverbs ... You're gonna literally be 'kick ass' in Manual Handling Risk Management ... and leverage your Business' growth! **Join me on that journey!** (including your personal one in the illustration below :.)

