

Accident in the kitchen

Sociology



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On one especially busy service on the seventeenth of October 2009, the sous-chef took it upon himself to deliver them downstairs because everyone else in the kitchen was incredibly busy and he had a free moment and wanted to clear the space to (somewhat ironically) avoid injury from the clutter. As he was approaching the staircase down to the dish pit, he slipped on a puddle on the floor and fell, hitting the back of his head on a table in the narrow space and twisting his ankle significantly. His head bled somewhat, but the major injury was in his ankle. He was a bit dazed by the blow to his head but remained conscious with no serious cognitive symptoms; however, he could not stand on his ankle. He was taken by a co-worker to the emergency room immediately, where he was diagnosed as probably not having any concussion (he had no post-concussion symptoms even in the days that followed) but did have a break in his ankle from rolling it as he slipped. The immediate treatment was to cast his ankle, but because of the type of injury, he was unable to be put in a walking cast.

It is impossible for him to complete his job duties whilst in a cast and unable to walk, so Ted was forced to miss nearly a month of work. The injury, however, had very little ligament damage and ted was able to make do with only very basic physical therapy once he got his cast off for the duration of just under a month, meaning that he was back to essentially full capabilities two months after the injury, though he could perform all work-related and most personal tasks fine immediately after the cast was taken off. The physical therapy was simple elastic band strengthening of his ligaments to ensure no long term damage would be done and was entirely successful.

Following this incident, the café/bakery that Ted worked at enacted several new policy changes. The first is a policy that if any liquid of any kind is

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spilled on the floor in the kitchen, whoever spilled it must drop everything, even in the middle of a busy service, and mop up the spill immediately to keep the area safe. On top of that, the café invested in non-slip rubber pads that keep people elevated and on a surface with a lot of traction. The only areas these are not placed are areas someone could easily trip on them. The café had resisted putting them in before this incident because staff did not want to have to clean the pads and remove and replace them all every night during cleanup. This incident did not result in an OSHA visit.

Ted now performs his tasks essentially in the same way as he previously had but says he tends to be more careful when carrying heavy objects and ensures that he has visibility to the ground at all times to watch for any spills and or obstacles.