

A Funny Thing Happened at Work...

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Editor's note: The following story is the first in a series of stories by Michael Crawford. If you have a story you'd like to share, please e-mail awelch@oscpa.com.

By Michael A. Crawford, CPA

Injured in Basic Training

My younger brother, Frankie, is my business partner and we conduct accounting and auditing training sessions and speak at conferences throughout each year. For several years, we have served as instructors at the week-long annual conference of the Association of Pacific Island Public Auditors (APIPA) held on various islands in the South Pacific. The conference, held at the Guam Marriott Resort, involved five days of training. Most of the days had concurrent sessions; I would train government accountants and auditors on a particular topic in one meeting room at the hotel while Frankie would train another group in a separate meeting room.

In the summer of 2002, Frankie and I were once again asked to make presentations at the annual conference. On the first day of the conference, the coordina-

tor entered the meeting room around 4:45 p.m., where I was closing with my group. She

walked calmly up to me at the front of the class and whispered in my ear, "Your brother had an accident and has been injured — you need to let the class go now and check on him."

I asked her, "What in the world happened? How do you get injured speaking to a group of accountants and auditors?"

She responded, "Just let the class go and head to the men's restroom where

your brother is now."

I immediately did as I was instructed and quickly headed toward the restroom. I entered the restroom, but my brother was nowhere to be found. However, the hotel manager and two security guards with first-aid kits were standing by the door. I introduced myself to them and asked where my brother was.

Suddenly, I heard Frankie's voice. "I'm back here in a stall," he yelled. I yelled back, "Are you all right? What happened?"

My brother told me his story.

Apparently, he had been leaning on a table in his meeting room while conducting his training session and had momentarily sat down on the table to relax his feet. However, the wooden frame table had glass partitions in the top and as he sat down, the weight of his body shattered the glass and he fell through the table.

Again, I asked if he was all right, to which he indicated he couldn't tell for sure but he thought there was a problem. When I asked why he couldn't tell for sure, he said, "I can't see back there, I just know there is a lot of blood coming from that area."

The hotel manager said hotel policy required them to check Frankie out to see if he needed medical attention.

Obviously, Frankie was very hesitant to come out of the stall. The manager and security guards opened an empty room nearby and instructed us to accompany them for the inspection. Although my brother was uncomfortable with this thought, I was also beginning to feel uneasy.

While we were walking down the hallway, I kept thinking to myself that I

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hadn't seen his naked backside in over 30 years — since he was a baby — and I wasn't looking forward to it. I'm sure Frankie wasn't anticipating his unveiling either.

After we entered the hotel room, Frankie was instructed to drop his pants and lay face down on the bed, to which he reluctantly complied. Immediately, upon seeing the injury, all four of us gasped — which did not reassure my brother.

The laceration on his backside was wide and deep. My brother asked how it looked. I couldn't resist and asked, "Your backside or the cut?"

The hotel manager said he clearly needed medical attention at the hospital or a clinic and that he would call for an ambulance. Frankie, already embarrassed enough, said, "I don't need or want an ambulance. Can't you just take me in the hotel shuttle?"

So we left in the hotel shuttle with the conference coordinator, a Guam native. Waiting in the ER, my brother,

the coordinator and I were talking and already joking about the incident and injury. While Frankie was with the doctor, the evening newscast came on the television in the waiting room. The lead story was a report about this international auditors conference that had come to the island and the televised footage were clips of my brother speaking to the conference participants in the opening session in the morning (before his accident). Although the coordinator and I were not watching the newscast, other locals in the waiting room (who had obviously listened to our earlier conversation) quickly alerted us to the TV report. They said, "Hey, there is your brother on TV. It must have been before he hurt his backside though."

I thought, "Great, now my brother is a celebrity in Guam for a reason he would just like to forget."

But I will never let him forget.

Thirteen stitches on his derrière in Guam. Now he is literally the butt of my jokes. €

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