

Respond, If You Please!

Written by LA Plume

Wednesday, 15 August 2012 08:49 - Last Updated Wednesday, 15 August 2012 10:20



(But not at dinner, via text message...)

Dear Ms. Plume,

I have been following with interest your responses to questions about the etiquette of the r.s.v.p., but nobody seems to be paying attention. I am so very tired of extending invitations to which people simply do not respond!

Some of these invitations are personal, but many are business and require a response to determine food, drink, place settings, etc. Sometimes they just don't attend, and sometimes they do. My dilemma is: do I remove them from my guest list and tell them that they've been removed because they are rude and have bad manners, or simply remove them and not explain? It seems to me that if they don't reply and don't come that they really aren't interested and I feel the fool for continuing to invite them.

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Jane

Dear Jane,

Why in the world would you continue to invite people who make you feel like a fool for inviting them? If they don't respond and don't show up, they have told you that they aren't interested. For those who don't r.s.v.p. and do show up, simply greet them at the door and say "I'm so surprised to see you! Since I didn't hear from you I wasn't expecting you." If it makes them feel uncomfortable, then too bad, because you then have to adjust the place settings, food portions, or whatever the situation calls for. Perhaps the acronym "r.s.v.p." is simply too esoteric for people in these days of loose etiquette, and it would be more appropriate to simply say: "Please let me know if you will be attending as I need to have adequate food and drink; and if you can't be bothered, then I won't invite you again."

L. A. Plume

Dear L. A. Plume,

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Is there any way that one can be told to remove their cell phone from their ear or frenetic little fingers when in the company of others??? I had people over for dinner the other night, and one guest was in such a hurry to grab her cell phone from her purse that she knocked over a bottle of wine on the counter and two glasses. Then she proceeded to go into another room and text for several minutes. I find this attachment to cell phones so very intrusive and rude; it isn't like she had a pending emergency out there or was even responding to a business call. Can anything be said??

Miffed

Dear Miffed,

I so agree with you! I've been known to ask someone to leave the table during a meal and not return until they are ready to turn off their phone. It tells everyone in their presence that they are simply not as important as whoever might be on the other end of the phone. I secretly (well not so much secretly now) suspect that these people need to find a way to feel important and being called and texted at all hours makes them feel needed/wanted/ whatever. There are those of us who remember the time when a couple of glasses of wine could do not only that, but make us feel young and pretty as well. Maybe someone should design a cell phone in the shape of a wine glass and we could have all of the above.

L. A. Plume

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