

**(U) Letters to Zelda: Your Experiences**

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In **Zelda's column** this month, she addressed the problem of one employee being the stuckee at the end of a luncheon because others didn't contribute their fair share to the check. Clearly, "Not a Moneybags" is not the only person who has had the experience of having to cover the bill for others. Here are some responses she received:

As a mathematician myself who has dined with others, I would recommend /against/ having the math guy figure out the check! Being good at math doesn't equate to being handy at arithmetic.

**Be Aware; Speak Up for Others Who Feel Like They Can't**

Kudos on a thoughtful, useful response to a situation most of us have encountered during our career! During my first tour here, our office took a monthly trip to Baltimore and dined at a nice (\$\$\$) restaurant. I was in the single digit of grades at that time. There was a coworker (one of the highest grades in the office) who ordered several adult beverages, an appetizer, and a dessert along with his lunch. He would ask for the bill, split the bill equally among the number of folks who were dining, then announce the amount due. This was one of those cases where your simple salad and glass of water would cost you \$30. Fortunately, a more vocal coworker of mine spoke up!

**Pass It On**

When a group of us go out for lunch, our usual method is to pass the bill around the table and then have everyone contribute their share. Before anyone leaves the table, the amount collected is added up and compared to the bill. If it's short, one or more in the group invariably realize they didn't cover their drink, or the tip or tax, etc., and adds in more funds. Only when the entire table is satisfied with the bill and tip payment do we get up and go. I agree that separate tables should get separate bills when possible. Letting people pay one by one at the register from a combined bill is just asking for trouble.

**No-Splitsville**

*[In response to Zelda's paragraph that began, "I like to think that your co-workers are not intentionally shorting the waitress."]*

You are way way too easy. That doesn't happen. The problem is done by the same people who say "Let's split the check four ways" after they had 2 Scotches, an appetizer, meal, and dessert and everyone else had a Coke and a burger.

**Card Me!**

In a previous org, I worked with one person that always volunteered to put the bill on his card for celebratory luncheons. He collected the money from each person while at the restaurant. His card had a 1% cash back, and because people gave him the cash directly before they left, he never got shorted.

(U) Looking for some of the older "Ask Zelda" columns? They are filed away in the archives under the "Ask Zelda! 2010" and "Ask Zelda! 2011" and "Ask Zelda! 2012" and "Ask Zelda! 2013" series.

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