

## **The Persuasion Pitfall**

Understand your audience and what laws of persuasion you are going to use on them. There are times and situations where certain persuasive laws or techniques are not appropriate. You cannot treat every person or every audience the same way. If you take persuasion too far, you will run into what I call the Persuasion Pitfall.

People are persuaded and influenced until they feel cheated, screwed, misled, or taken advantage of, and then they never tell you about their feelings or do business with you again.

In sales and marketing, we have a tendency push the envelope a little too hard when trying to persuade others. This could be in a personal one-on-one encounter with a friend or in a visit to the local furniture store. Persuaders who do not possess the ability to read others or who do not have the skills necessary to persuade typically fall victim to the Persuasion Pitfall. They will take persuasion a little too far, using extreme pressure or trying to sell you a product you don't need or want. Use persuasion, influence, or power the wrong way and people lose all trust in you, never to be persuaded by you again. When over-persuading, you do or say something that sets off silent alarms in you prospects' minds. It could be a feeling of uneasiness, or a bad feeling toward you, your store, or your product.

This pitfall also includes selling a faulty product. The challenge with this pitfall is that 99% of the people in the world will say nothing to you about the defective item. They simply will never go into your store again. They will never want to associate with your product. Or, if you are a friend or member of the family, they will never trust or listen to your point of view again. This pitfall is a silent killer because most persuaders don't realize the mistake was ever even made. The duped person will never come back to the store and will probably tell others not to go back too. You have probably had this happen to you many times, at a car dealership, in retail stores, and on the phone. You have to have a 6<sup>th</sup> sense in persuasion and know how hard you can push.

We hate to feel manipulated or pressured. We have all been burned or taken advantage of and when we see signs of such behavior we will start to run. Many uneducated persuaders can be offensive, condescending, obnoxious, and insulting. Some people will need to have space, some will have to talk to a spouse, and still others will have to come back later before making a decision. You have to sense and know via knowledge and experience and non-verbal cues how many tools of persuasion you can use without running up against this pitfall. You have to sense your limits before you cross the line.