

Negotiation Versus Persuasion

Let's talk about where negotiation fits into the world of persuasion and the difference between the two. Persuasion occurs when your ideas are so convincing that the other party ends up adopting your point of view. With persuasion, there is no compromising as there is in negotiation. Rather, the other party willfully and enthusiastically abandons their position to embrace yours. This abandonment is not brought about by manipulation because the other party clearly sees the gains and advantages of doing business with you. Negotiation, on the other hand, is a process of give and take. It's being able to overcome

objections on both sides of an issue and ultimately reaching some common ground. While persuasion is the ultimate ideal, anytime any one of us is presenting our ideas, the other party is often equally committed to their own convictions, thus making negotiation the next best path. Often when we hear the word "negotiation," we think of a complex deal going on in the business world. In reality, however, all of us are involved in multiple negotiation processes every day. For example, when you want steak but your spouse wants lasagna, you may banter back and forth about why one is better than the other. In the end, however, you end up going to a place that offers a bit of both. In that instance, you may not have thought of yourself as negotiating, but that's really what it was. Negotiation is so common in day-to-day life that you must master the skills of great negotiators to become a Master Persuader.

Negotiation Phone or E-mail

In our age of ever-expanding communication possibilities, researchers have been drawn to answer the question of which communication mode is most likely to lend itself to successful negotiation. Their answer? It depends. Face-to-face communication is more likely to alleviate any possibility of miscommunication or deception. When you're actually there, in person, you are more apt to pick up all the nuances of the exchange. That way, you will be better able to gauge what the other party is thinking and to determine the direction in which the negotiating is headed.

For the same reasons, it is also easier to create and maintain rapport. If there is already a fair amount of tension in the air, however, negotiating by phone can take the edge off, can provide breathing room and can minimize the effectiveness of any pressure tactics that may have been employed. E-mail's main advantage is that both parties have control over saying exactly what they want to say and how they want to say it. Since there is no ebb and flow to live conversation, the involved parties can keep the floor as long as they want. On the flip side, e-mailing can tend to make the negotiating parties less restrained and more impulsive in their communication. This rashness isn't always a bad thing, but it definitely can be if tensions exist. One study found that abrupt and unmannerly exchanges occurred 102 times when negotiating via e-mail as opposed to only 12 times when negotiating face-to-face.