

Manipulation *versus* Persuasion

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A twisted road dost these two brothers pave. It is a bit like distinguishing between a bent line and a curved line. Both have two characteristics in common. One – they seek to *tell* someone something. Two – they both seek to follow an *agenda*.

Manipulation seeks one's own agenda through misinformation or the lack of information. Persuasion seeks one's own agenda through flattery or the appearance of a benevolent or caring nature.



Manipulation; A salesperson might say, “You had better hurry this is the last one we have in stock.” Yet, the company either has one at another location or could simply re-order another unit. This would be using “omission” or misinformation of all the facts in the presentation to a customer.

Persuasion; Salesperson says to their customer, “You seem like a discerning buyer so I’ll share with you the two reasons why so many customers are coming in right now and wanting to own this unit; first, it is the most finely built machine of its type in the world. Secondly, *never* has ownership been so affordable as it is today!” Here the intent carries a higher degree of persuasion built into the great reasons given that “so many customers” are taking advantage of at this time. The underlying message, “After all, if everyone else is doing it and the price is really, really good, maybe you ought to hurry as a discerning buyer so you won’t miss out.”

In the end which best serves another person or customer?

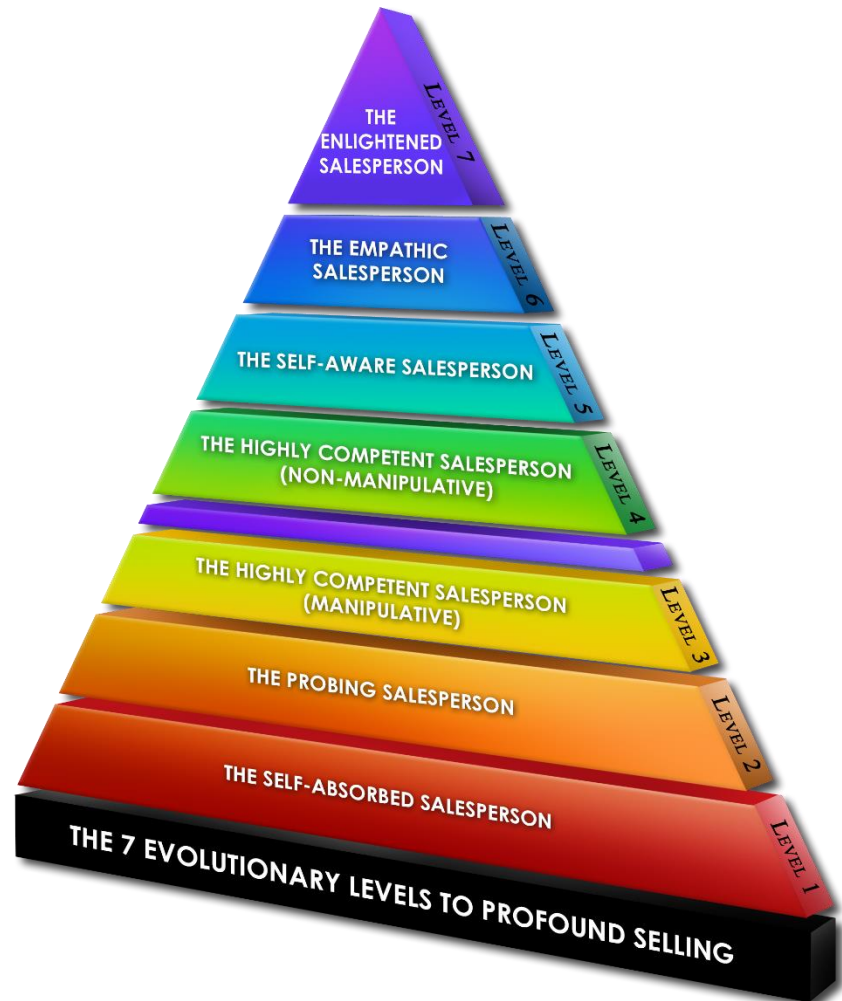
Manipulation is often said to be based in trickery/deceit. Yet, flattery is much the same. I, as a salesperson may choose to use these methods when I simply do not know any other way. If this is all that I have ever seen or been taught, then how can I possibly know of any other way to assist a customer?

Manipulation and persuasion are truly, at the core, *self-serving* from both points of view. For when did persuasion ever echo the cares of another person within it? Both seek the speaker's/salesperson's agenda more than that of the customer's. Both are manipulative. You could say they are both of the same coin. Which side do you focus upon, heads-manipulation or tails-persuasion; it's still the same coin.

In the book, *The Seven Evolutionary Levels to Profound Selling*, which levels do you suppose utilize manipulation or persuasion? Since persuasion is simply a softer method of manipulation, both of these behaviors exist in Levels 1 – 3. The desire to choose either of these behaviors dissipates as an individual grows into Level 4.

The deep purple line located between Levels 3 and 4 is there to indicate the **huge shift** between Level 3 and Level 4, from self-serving to serving others. About 90% of all salespeople reside in Levels 1 – 3 in their behaviors during the sales process.

Manipulation or persuasion is not good or bad, right or wrong. These approaches are simply one way to approach the profession of selling. As you can probably see, persuasion is generally more effective than manipulation due to its more subtle nature. Yet, both of these tools are less effective than the use of genuine *understanding*, which takes hold in Level 4.



If your [Sales eIQ](#) score is 71% or higher, there is a low probability that you are using either persuasion or manipulation in your interactions with customers, friends or family. The biggest challenge with these two behaviors is becoming conscious of when either is being utilized, *becoming aware* of what is manipulative and what is not is the first step to moving out of these less effective, less efficient approaches in the profession of selling.

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