Successful business negotiation is a process where two sides agree to compromise their desired outcome in order to achieve an agreement. Therefore the popular notion of a win-win agreement is a fallacy. A “good” negotiated agreement is one where both sides have not received everything that they wanted coming in to the negotiation but enough to allow them to sleep at night with the knowledge that they can “live” with the deal. A “good” negotiated agreement is one where there are no “losers”. You may become a “loser” in negotiating a business agreement if you commit one or more of the following errors:

1. Not knowing the facts and figures and accepting your partner’s assumptions without validating and confirming their factual basis.

2. Not first negotiating with yourself and committing to a set of core principles that you are not willing to compromise under any and all circumstances (your “red lines”)

3. Not making a genuine effort ahead of time to understand the personality, style and substance of your negotiating partner.

4. Not attempting to discover your partner’s “red lines” to the best of your ability and trample on them at any time during the negotiations.

5. Not broadcasting your “red lines” early and firmly enough in the negotiation;

6. Not being prepared (and making it known to your partner) to walk away from the negotiations and forego the agreement if it becomes clear that your core principles will have to be compromised; and

7. Not understanding that no agreement has been reached until the agreement in its totality has been legally executed. Thus even elements of prior agreement are open for change;

8. Not recognizing that business agreements are not and should not be taken personally;
9. Not ensuring that your negotiation strategies and tactics are consistent with your personality and project your core beliefs and values;
10. Not willing to accept the final agreement without regret, remorse or “second guessing”.