

A 5-step cure for worrywarts

Gee, my team might lose this sale. If that happens, we could miss our quota. If we keep losing sales, I could lose my job. These days, out-of-work managers need months or years to find a new job. I couldn't pay our bills. I'd be pumping gas for a living!"

Sound like you?

Now, a little worrying is good. Leaders need to anticipate and head off problems. A lot of worry, though, leaves you paralyzed over what *might* happen.

Here are five techniques for curbing worry:

- 1. Do something else for a while.** That can be difficult because a worrier wants to keep worrying. You have to call on your self-esteem to change the subject.
- 2. Set some goals.** A large-scale form of diversion—such as setting goals—helps you settle big questions about your purpose. Sometimes, in the process, you can even solve problems.
- 3. Plan.** Armed with a goal, sit yourself down and write an action plan. Because feeling out of control fuels worrying, setting a plan lets you take control. List every problem, then plan a countermeasure.
- 4. Pat yourself on the back.** Say, "OK, things are under control. If something happens, I have a plan."
- 5. Reason.** Here's the basic, rational question: "If what I'm worried about actually happened, would things work out?" Usually, the answer is "Yes."

— Adapted from *Face It: Recognizing and Conquering the Hidden Fear That Drives All Conflict at Work*, Art Horn, Amacom.