



# Worst-case Scenario Planning

Use this guide to identify and objectively assess the top fears, concerns and risks that you have in your business.

## Circles of Control

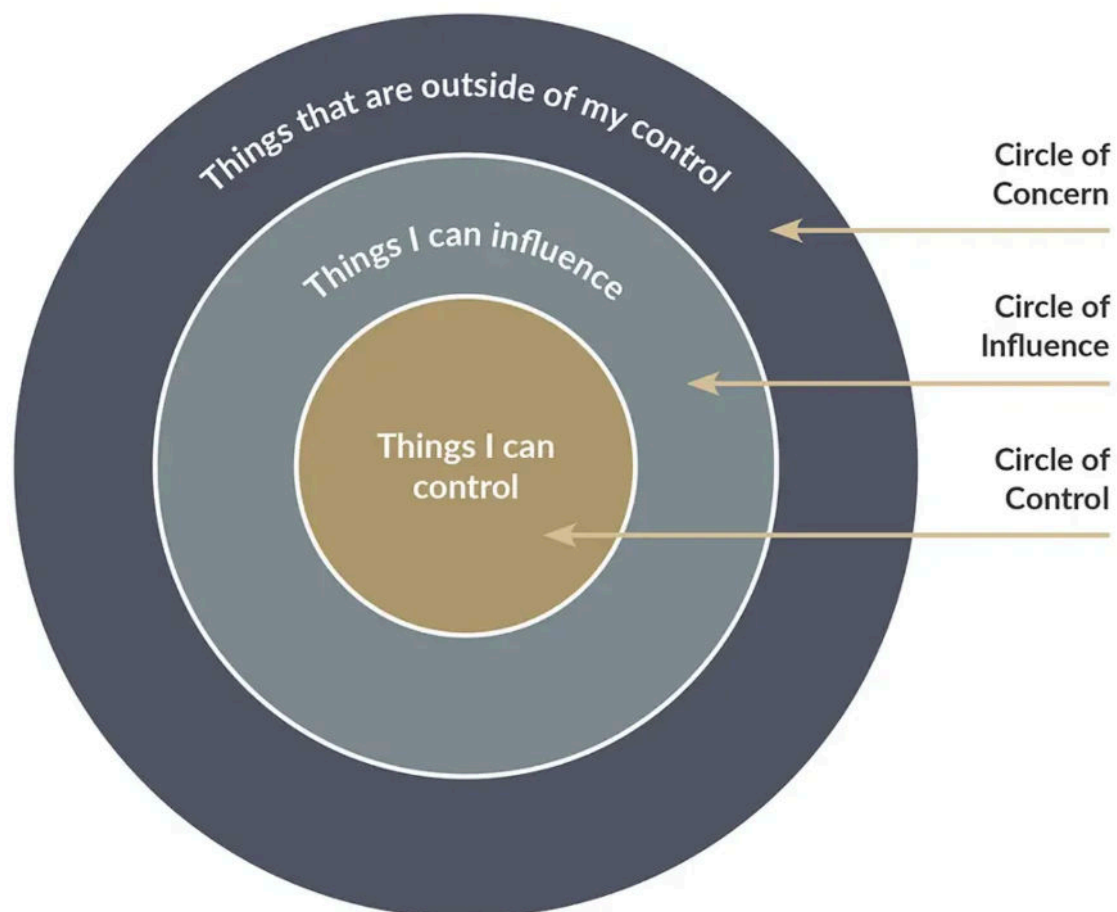


Image Credit: Positive Psychology

<b>Circle of control</b>	What is in your direct control, something you can do/an action that you can take autonomously without needing to check/involve anyone else.
<b>Circle of influence</b>	Things you can influence, but that require other things/people to be in place or to be involved to achieve. The actions you take here need to be proportionate to the extent to which you can impact/influence the outcome (Effort vs. Impact).
<b>Circle of Concern</b>	Things you care about but that are not your sole responsibility to resolve (such as the political operating context). You can still take some action (for instance, make a financial contribution to a worthy cause, sign a petition, write to your MP) but you alone cannot influence the outcome.

## How to use

- Jot down all the things you may be worrying about in the present moment.
- Plot each item on your list against the circles outlined in the model above. Sometimes this can take a few goes to define what is truly in your control.

Once you have a definitive list of those factors in your direct control (this is usually only 2-4 items, if done properly), you can then tackle each one separately. Take each item on your list and ask these questions:

1. What is the negative outcome you are fearful of?
2. What is the likelihood of this negative outcome occurring?
3. What is the negative impact of this outcome occurring?
4. What measures do you already have in place to mitigate this negative outcome from occurring?
5. What else could you do to minimise the likelihood and/or the impact?
6. What is one SMART\* action you can undertake to mitigate this negative thing from happening (or minimising the negative impact should it occur)?

*\*Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, Time-bound*

## Blank for your notes

Please use this space to jot down your top fears, concerns and risks:

# Client case study

## Context

A client is the joint owner of a building surveying company specialising in historic and complex legacy and community projects. They have been operating for more than two decades and have great relationships with clients and pride themselves on having a dedicated and happy workforce who have remained loyal to the company.

## Specific business challenge

The client wishes to invest in a new member of staff to grow the business and manage an increasing workload which is quickly becoming overwhelming for existing staff. The client feels unable to take a decision to bring in a new member of the team because they are not confident that the strong pipeline of work will continue, in the current economic climate. The client's root concerns were that they may have to make someone redundant or they may not get the skills and right person to fit with the existing team.

## Coaching intervention

Coaching questions used	Client response
Have you had to make someone redundant before?	No.
If you had to make someone redundant, what would you do?	We would speak to the person and explain the situation. We would offer support and explore how we may support them to access another role elsewhere. We would speak to the rest of the team to reassure them. We could engage some HR support and advice to make sure we followed a proper process.
Have you encountered issues with a new member of the team in the past?	Never.
What might you do if you did experience issues with a new member of staff?	We would speak to them to understand what support they needed. We could offer some training. We could work with a coach to establish clear expectations and help us with line management duties. We could seek some HR advice about how to manage.
What options have you explored already to manage workloads?	Speaking to staff regularly about workloads, offered overtime for some projects, considered a less senior/qualified staff member who would be on a lower salary but would require more time and support to get up to speed.
How have you managed this situation in the past?	We've reviewed the pipeline and invested in a new and experienced member of staff who can get on and deliver.
If the external context were not an issue, what would you do?	We would go ahead a hire based on current workloads and pipeline.

What else could you consider?	We could speak to a couple of contacts in our network and explore their availability on an associate basis.
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The simple act of my client and I having this conversation meant that we could objectively assess the fears (unlikely), and identify any legitimate and practical things that my client might consider. We were then able to identify actions that would ensure that as far as was reasonably practicable, they had done everything they could to manage the workload and keep their existing staff happy. During this process, the client identified two immediate potential candidates that they had not considered before this conversation.

## Result

Following the conversation the client felt happier. The client described how they were no longer worrying about this fear and when we next met, the client explained how they were taking practical steps to actively seek a new team member and had already spoken to a couple of potentials from within in their business network. The client also shared how they had recounted this coaching conversation with their business peers who were also concerned about the external operating context.

## Summary

The only thing we can ever control in our lives and businesses are:

- The actions we take
- The intention behind the action (was it positive or negative)
- How we think and feel about the action we take.

The more we focus on those things that are directly in our control and get clear on those actions, the more likely we are to achieve the things we want.

## Actions

Please use this space to identify one SMART action you can take: