

men displayed was *real*. Yet all that stood between them and the defeat of that fear was one drop into the water below. On more than one occasion I saw young men "accidentally" pushed off the board. The result: fear defeated.

This incident, familiar to thousands of former Navy men, illustrates just one point: action cures fear. Indecision, postponement, on the other hand, fertilize fear.

Jot that down in your success rule book right now. *Action cures fear.*

Action *does* cure fear. Several months ago a very troubled executive in his early forties came to see me. He had a responsible job as a buyer for a large retailing organization.

Worriedly, he explained, "I'm afraid of losing my job. I've got that feeling that my days are numbered."

"Why?" I asked.

"Well, the pattern is against me. Sales figures in my department are off seven percent from a year ago. This is pretty bad, especially since the store's total sales are up six percent. I've made a couple of unwise decisions recently, and I've been singled out several times by the merchandise manager for not keeping pace with the company's progress.

"I've never felt quite like this before," he continued. "I've lost my grip, and it shows. My assistant buyer senses it. The salespeople see it, too. Other executives, of course, are aware that I'm slipping. One buyer even suggested at a meeting of all head buyers the other day that part of my line should be put in his department, where, he said, 'It could make money for the store.' It's like drowning and having a crowd of spectators just standing there waiting for me to sink away."

The executive talked on, elaborating further on his predica-