

January 2022



How to Accomplish Your Goals in 2022

It's officially January 2022, and I'm finishing up my goal list for the year, both personally and professionally.

I don't wait for a new year to make goals, of course, but I do spend a lot of time in December reflecting on the past year and figuring out what my big goals are going to be in the next one. What went well? What needs attention? Did I accomplish the things I set out to do at the beginning of the year? What do I need to do now to move the needle on my five-year goals? My 10-year goals?

This year, I've been reflecting especially on some of the best advice I've received and written down over the years. It comes from books, CEOs I know and admire, and even from my kids! I've noted and used so many things as I've planned for the future. As I polish my goals for 2022, I want to share a few of those.

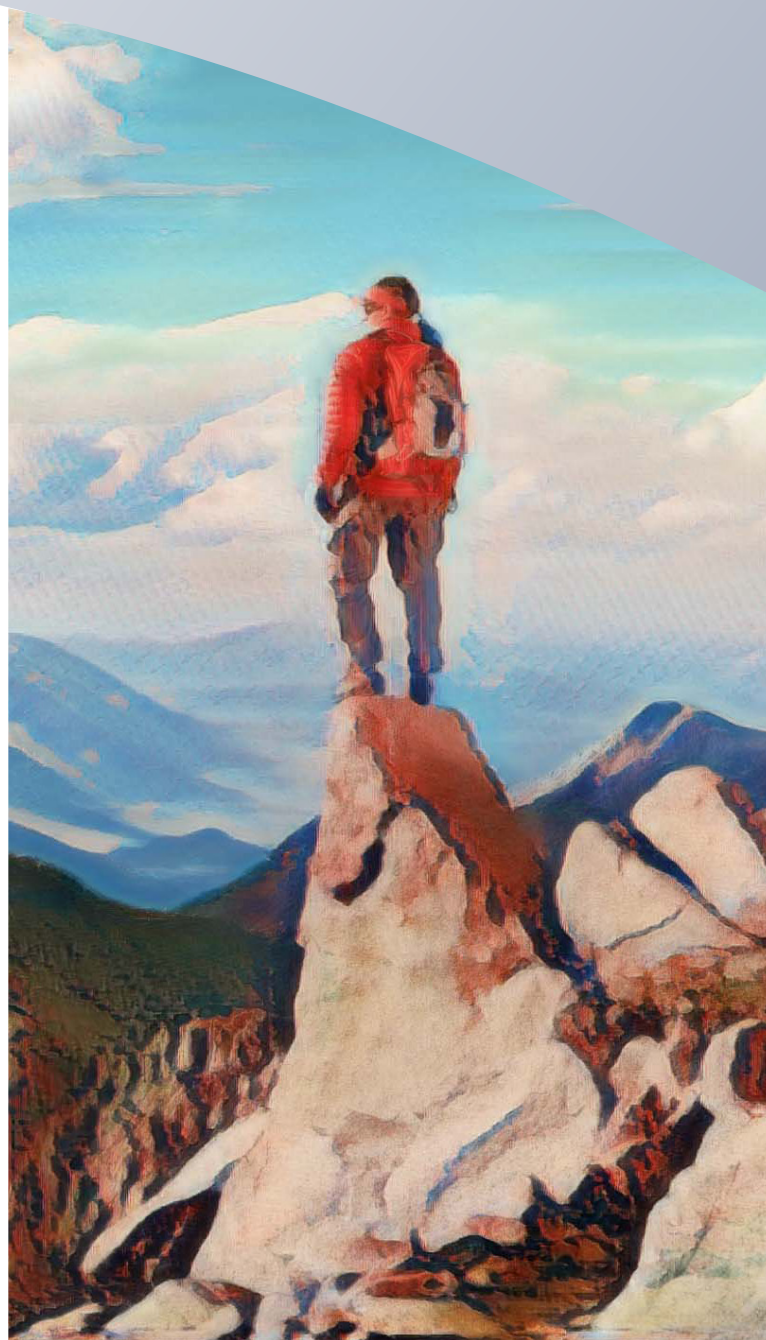
Look at the End Goal to Find Your Way

I had the opportunity to teach this concept to my youngest son a while back when he brought home a maze from school. Watching him struggle and get frustrated as his line encountered barrier after barrier, I stepped in to show him a trick. If you start at the end of the maze, the path opens up clearly.

This is some of the best advice I've ever been given. It is so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day task lists and the smallest details of our lives. And it's not a bad thing to focus on the small stuff! But we all need to look up and see the big picture sometimes. To visualize the outcome we want, we can work backward to figure out how to accomplish it.

If It Doesn't Move the Needle, Don't Do It

I've gotten some pushback about this one in the past, but I'm serious. I make it a point at least a few times



[Continued on Page 2 ...](#)

... continued from Cover

a year to focus on my long-term goals and ask myself, “Is what I’m doing now going to get me there?” If the answer is no, more times than not, that’s my cue to reprioritize and make some changes.

At the end of the day, the majority of our time should be spent on the things that push us toward our goals. If we allow ourselves to constantly get distracted by the little fires, we’re cutting the legs out from under our own growth. Other people’s crises are not always our crises. Except in very rare cases, we need to save a portion of our day to work on the things that will matter in the long run.

For me, that time is in the morning. The early a.m. is my most important working space. That’s when I focus without disruption on doing the things that may not be the “sexiest” on my task list, but they need to get done. There’s an old idiom most of us have heard more times than we can count: We need to “eat the frog.” And that’s true. Having scheduled, uninterrupted time to work on things that are important and not necessarily urgent is one of the fastest ways to make sure we’re continuing to grow.

Be Open to New Possibilities

One thing I run into a lot when speaking with potential clients is this dreaded phrase: “We’ve never done _____ before, and we’re still doing just fine. And we’ve been in business for 20 years!”

Look, stagnation kills. All the experts know it. It’s preached in almost every business or self-help book you

read. Life is a swiftly moving river; if you’re not rowing, you’re going backward.

And I’m not saying I’m immune to this particular mind trap, either! However, when I hear myself say/think, “This is the way we’ve always done it,” I’m pretty good at pumping the brakes in my own mind and holding myself accountable to listen to what’s being said/read and take it in without judgment. Of course, sometimes it’s right to make a change, and sometimes it’s not. But we’ll never know if we don’t stay open to the possibilities.

Here’s a good example. My assistant was getting buried in emails this last year. So, I told her about a new integration a friend of mine had recommended to help speed through your inbox. She balked at first, saying, “From everything I’m reading, it sounds like this does everything our current system can do. There’s no need.” But after a couple more months went by and her inbox wasn’t getting any lighter, she finally tried out the new system. And I laughed as she came into my office with stars in her eyes the next day and cheerfully exclaimed, “I was wrong! This thing is awesome! Best investment you’ve ever made! I’m never going back.”

Here’s the point: There are always new innovations! They’re not always right for us, and we definitely want to stay away from shiny object syndrome. But if there’s something out there that can actually move the needle, save time, propel me toward my goals, and/or make life easier so I can spend more time on other things, I want to know about it!

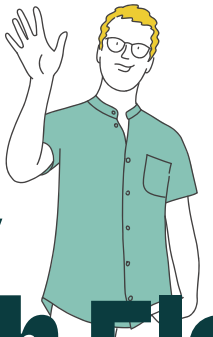
Lastly, I just want to end with gratitude. As we move forward this year, I can’t help but think back over the last two years. It’s been a wild ride! But through it all, I am grateful for my health, my family, and my team who has wholeheartedly stepped up to the plate and swung for the fences! And for you. Thanks for reading. Thanks for sharing. And thanks for reaching out and sharing your own stories with me. Here’s to all of our success.

Happy New Year!

-Shaun



Goodbye, Slow Cash Flow



5 Tactics to Pick Up Your Business Right Now!

No. 3: Take advantage of New Year’s resolutions!

Your customers might have already shared their 2022 goals with you, but if not, you can still find out! As we’re still in the first quarter, make sure you chat with your customers about whether your services or products are helping meet their goals in 2022, and ask what you can do to make their experience easier and better.

No. 1: Add additional services.

Is there a service you could offer but haven’t tried yet? What’s a common or convenient add-on you could offer to your existing services? Don’t hesitate to try new things right now. It might be just what your company needs to catch people’s attention quickly and lure them away from your competitors.

No. 2: Grow your company base.

You could do this in several ways during your slow season. For one, you can review your current customers, ensure their needs are being met, and decide where you may be able to offer additional services for them. Second, find new opportunities for small or special events within your niche or local area and see how these events and opportunities could fit into your plans! Third, don’t forget to ask trusted current customers for referrals — seeking out customer referrals can be done for little or no cost!

No. 4: Craft a social media strategy.

Let’s face it: Social media is here to stay, and you should consider when and where you want to use it for your business. It can also be a fun way to engage with customers — it’s easier for them to find your website, read reviews, and reach out to you to ask questions. Put together a monthly media calendar and add all your promotions, events, and specials, which will make it easier to add new content to post!

No. 5: Don’t forget to offer teasers.

With your 2022 goals in the works, don’t forget to hype upcoming promotions — it’ll prove you’re proactive and already the next best thing. Your customers won’t have to look anywhere else.

Take advantage of the slow time by adopting one of these strategies — you might be surprised by how effectively they can attract your customers’ attention again.

Boosting Employee Retention

Now, more than ever, as businesses work to overcome and navigate the pandemic, reducing employee turnover is crucial. Recruiting, hiring, and training replacements is costly, and turnover damages morale among your remaining employees, which in turn reduces productivity.

According to a CareerBuilder study, 50% of employees base their decision to stay with a company or leave on whether they feel tangibly recognized. A study conducted by SurveyMonkey and Bonusly found that 63% of employees who feel recognized are not likely to look for another job. And when you think about it, it makes sense — when your team feels less like a number and more like a member of a company family, they feel valued and want to stick around.

But how do you most effectively show employee appreciation? We have some creative ideas beyond the norm.

Tailor-Made Rewards

One of the best ways to say “thank you” to individual members of your team is to find custom ways to show appreciation to each. Taking the time to honor them in a way you know they enjoy speaks volumes. Do you have a “Star Wars” fan in the office? A Baby Yoda notebook or a Mandalorian-themed pair of socks might help

that employee to feel valued as their hobby or passion was important enough for you to recognize.

Get Social

Utilizing social media to help recognize your employees on their special days, such as birthdays or work anniversaries, is a great way to showcase them. You can even share fun facts about your employees or share their accomplishments. Plus, not only will your employees enjoy this, but your customer base will also enjoy learning about the team, too!

Celebrate Just Because

Gathering in or out of the office for holidays, birthdays, and accomplishments is nothing new. But what about celebrating for a non-obvious reason? Maybe it's Taco Tuesday or simply the first day of the month. Try to plan an event like this when you know your staff may be feeling a little stressed or extra busy. They are sure to appreciate the break and thoughtfulness!

By blending employee appreciation into your company culture, you will be well on your way to adopting a positive atmosphere for your employees. Remember, your employees are your most valuable asset! Help them to feel that way, too.

Uh-Oh



How many companies do you follow on social media? Odds are that once you add up your favorite restaurants, clothing brands, and stores, you can't count them on both hands!

On Instagram alone, 90% of accounts follow at least one business according to Social Pilot, and Sprout Social reports that across platforms, “57% of consumers will follow a brand to learn about new products or services while 47% will follow to stay up to date on company news.”

Those are just two reasons it's vital for your company to have an up-to-date social media

Outdated Social Media Marketing Plan?

Steps to Finding a New Strategy

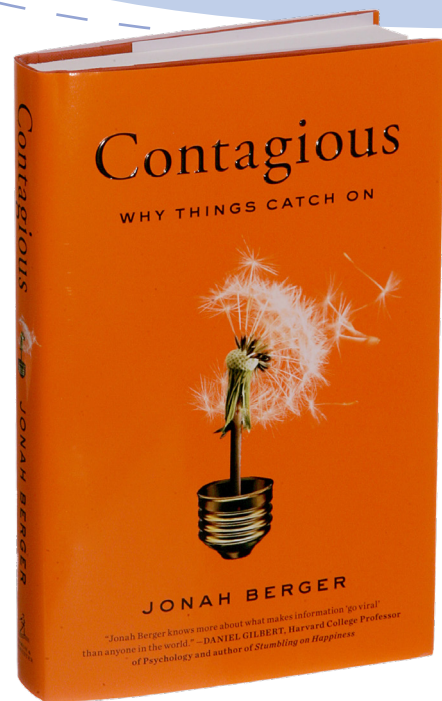
strategy. Social media expands the audience for your brand, keeps you top of mind, and helps followers get to know you personally — creating an ideal basis for other avenues of relationship marketing. Better yet, 90% of your social media work can be done for free.

If you already have a social media strategy, that's great — but is it updated for 2022? Social media trends change so quickly! (Remember Instagram before reels? That was only a year and a half ago.) You really need to refresh your game plan every year. Follow these six steps to revamp your existing strategy or create a brand-new plan for 2022.

- 1. Get a handle on your metrics.** Social media accounts can teach you a lot about how customers perceive your brand — but only if you track your metrics. Keeping an eye on your follower count, likes, and comments is helpful, but Sprout Social explains that you can dive deeper to figure out KPIs like your reach (how many people see each post), clicks, engagement (social interactions divided by impressions), hashtag performance, and even sentiment (positive versus negative interactions from viewers). You can gather this data yourself or purchase a social media metrics analysis tool like Falcon or Awario to do it for you.

- 2. Set strategic goals.** Now it's time to set actionable goals! These should be measurable and tied to the key metrics you identified in Step No. 1. For example, don't just set the goal to “boost community engagement” —

Continued on Page 6 ...



How Do You Make Your Campaign Go 'Viral'?

Check Out 'Contagious: Why Things Catch On'

When people see something popular, such as cat videos, their initial reaction might be, “It's by complete luck that this cat video went viral,” or “It's a cat video — of course it'll be

popular on the internet!” But if you look at the science and research behind popular media, it might reveal a different story, like it did for Jonah Berger.

In Jonah Berger's book, “Contagious: Why Things Catch On,” he explains that there are six key reasons that drive people to talk and share things, abbreviated by STEPPS:

Social Currency: They may share a video or story to make themselves look funny, intelligent, or overall good, rather than bad.

Triggers: People tend to talk about things that are on their minds. When a related topic comes up, a piece of content may “trigger” a significant memory that prompts someone to share it.

Ease for Emotion: “When we care, we share,” Berger told Wharton University of Pennsylvania in an interview. “The more likely we care about a piece of information ... the more likely we pass something on.”

Public: When something is public and seen repeatedly, the more likely we are to imitate it.

Practical Value: “News you can use” — can this content or information help others and make them better off?

Stories: Stories are great vessels of information. Create a narrative that people want to tell, and your ideas will come along for the ride.

It might seem like these STEPPS would only apply to flashy products and multimillion-dollar marketing campaigns, but that's not true. Take it from Blendtec, a blender company with a \$50 marketing budget (not \$50 million, just \$50). A new marketing hire was confused by the amount of sawdust in the office and asked people if they were undergoing construction efforts. It turned out that the CEO regularly tested blenders with unorthodox materials because he wanted to make the strongest blender possible.

That's when the marketing hire created a video campaign: “Will It Blend?” Their video of blending an iPhone successfully got over 10 million views — it was incredibly impressive and evoked awe plus top-of-mind, practical value (“You're looking for a strong blender? Look at this!”) and a fascinating story of how the ad came to be.

Using these STEPPS as a small-business owner might save you millions with just one clever idea. We recommend checking out “Contagious: Why Things Catch On” by Jonah Berger to learn more!

Find Us
on Social!
f i t i

THE Good News We Impacted (More) Lives This Holiday Season

Every year, Newsletter Pro's nonprofit Fostering Christmas collects gifts and donations for foster children who enter the system after Thanksgiving. Due to time constraints, these children are not included on other donor lists. This year's need was particularly high, as the number of children in foster care ballooned when pandemic restrictions eased.

We are truly humbled to share these figures. In 2021, Fostering Christmas ...

Fulfilled the holiday wish lists of 328 children

Had 220 sponsors fulfill wish lists

Received nearly \$23,000 in monetary donations (not including gift cards)

Purchased thousands of additional presents thanks to the monetary support of 106 donors

write down how many likes and shares you want on average. Similarly, don't just decide to "grow your audience" — set a goal for a number of followers you want. As you do this, remember social media is best for raising brand awareness and building engagement, not necessarily boosting sales. Don't set yourself up to fail!

- 3. Analyze the competition.** To create a competitive social media strategy, study what your competitors are doing. Which platforms are they on? When are they posting? Which posts are getting the most engagement? Who are their followers? How many do they have? Examine their accounts to get answers to these questions, then compare their metrics with yours to find your weaknesses, strengths, and opportunities. You can use a digital tool like Benchmark to do this or find step-by-step instructions for conducting a competitive analysis yourself on Falcon's website, Falcon.io.
- 4. Create missing accounts, and delete useless ones.** Where is your audience? Take a deep dive into the ideal demographic for your brand and create a customer avatar. Then ask yourself, "Where are they online that my company isn't?" If you're targeting young people but aren't on TikTok, for example, that's a big branding mistake. Similarly, if you're aiming for older professionals but use Instagram, not Facebook or LinkedIn, you're missing big opportunities to expand your customer base. Check out the Pew Research Center's 2021 Social Media Fact Sheet (PewResearch.org/Internet/fact-sheet/social-media) to see where different demographics congregate.
- 5. Choose a brand voice.** Everyone knows that if you follow Wendy's on Twitter, it is synonymous with sass, and Amazon Prime is famous for its witty engagement with TV show superfans on Instagram. What will your brand's voice be? Are you a highly educated, serious attorney, or a down-to-earth lawyer next door? Before you post, pick a brand voice and stick to it. That persona will determine your content, what you share from other creators, and the way you write your captions.
- 6. Brainstorm (and schedule) themed content.** Once you have your brand voice nailed down, it's time to pick themes or silos for your content. Will you post memes? Testimonials? Team photos? A mix of all three? (This is the right option.) Pick your key themes and keep your brand's fonts and colors in mind while planning them. Then, post, post, post! Don't forget to use your stories on Instagram and Facebook, too. Most social media platforms have built-in features that allow you to create posts in advance and schedule them to go live at strategic times, but you can also invest in a social media management tool that will do this work for you. Sprout Social, Sendible, Loomly, and HubSpot are just a few options packed with useful features.

As you implement your new plan, remember that social media is just one part of the marketing puzzle. From here, you can also utilize other relationship marketing strategies like email marketing campaigns and print newsletters to convert your followers into customers.

Holiday Photo Card Company Makes Big Moves

Shutterfly Moves Beyond Personalization

This past holiday season, you likely received a Shutterfly card or two featuring families dressed in their holiday best flashing joyous smiles and spreading seasonal cheer. But Shutterfly may have also been behind much more.

Recently, Shutterfly has been ramping up, reaching more demographics, and cranking out personalized items (mainly greeting cards). This past holiday season, 40% of younger people aged 18-34 planned on sending out a personalized photo or holiday card with their family, significant other, or pets. Not only are sales up, but the company also launched a new campaign, too!

In partnership with both Marie Kondo and The Onion, Shutterfly launched a new campaign in October that looks to build upon personalization where humor plays a large role. "People are much more playful with their cards than they have been in the past," Craig Rowley, chief marketing officer of Shutterfly, explained.



In 2020, Shutterfly also acquired Spoonflower, giving them access to a global marketplace of customizable wallpaper, fabric, and home decor. Acquisitions like this offer Shutterfly an endless number of options to provide to their client base, broadening the creative possibilities and growing the total addressable market. The lens of creativity has been expanded upon, and not only can you place photos on greeting cards, but the customizable design world has also been tapped into. "We intend to own this space of customization," Rowley stated.

For Shutterfly, this is only the beginning. More than 20 years ago, Shutterfly pioneered online photo sharing. Now, the consumer can personalize anything. By surrounding consumers with choices, just any old gift off the rack is a thing of the past. Instead of buying a typical pink comforter for your daughter, the customization options are endless. You can now buy something that features the family dog, favorite cartoon characters, your children's very own artwork, or even a photo collage.

We are excited to see where Shutterfly goes next as the options expand. Shutterfly, we're keeping an eye on you!

Resource of the Month

On Page 4, we filled you in on three of the hottest marketing trends for 2022 and explained why they work. One of them was creating and sharing video content on social media. Since we already covered the "why," now it's time to go over a "how": Vimeo.

Vimeo is a comprehensive video creation and sharing platform for small businesses. It's far from the only way to create video — you can use the video feature on Instagram to film a reel, for example, or record a YouTube video on your smartphone — but it's one of the best.

With Vimeo, you can easily create videos for your social channels, run a high-quality livestream, or film a tutorial or product walk-through complete with screen-sharing. It's a marketing tool, a client/patient education tool, and an internal communications tool all in one.

Reel in More Prospects With Video Marketing

Resource of the Month: Vimeo

On the content creation side, Vimeo offers video templates that give your marketing a head start. The videos you make can be shared or livestreamed straight from the platform, and you can use Vimeo's in-house lead capture and analytics features to learn more about your viewers and turn them into clients. Vimeo's player is ad-free, and you can organize all of your videos in a single library for your team to access.

Speaking of your team, Vimeo's features can help you out beyond marketing. You can livestream meetings, record SOPs and messages, and train new hires using the platform. As Vimeo reminds us:

"In companies where management had adopted video for corporate communication before the pandemic, employees were over 50% more likely to see their organization as well-equipped to transition into the future of work."

PCMag rates Vimeo 3.5 out of 5 stars, noting that while it is "the video platform for artists, advertisers, and general

Get Inspired

"You have to see failure as the beginning and the middle, but never entertain it as an end."

—Jessica Herrin, founder and CEO of Stella & Dot



creative types who produce high-quality content," it has a crowded web portal and a high price tag. Vimeo's plans range from "Plus" at \$7/month to "Premium" at \$75/month. There's also an unpriced "Enterprise" level. To check out all of the pricing or start a free trial, visit Vimeo.com/upgrade.

Cactus Is the New Coconut



Pricklee Cactus Water Is Making a Splash

Do people actually like coconut water? That question prompted five pharmacists to shift their career focus from health care to a brand-new product — cactus water.

Cactus water is thriving against coconut water.

About 15 years ago, coconut water entered the beverage industry as a healthy, electrolyte-fueled, low-sugar drink alternative to overly sweet juices, sodas, and even water. It's been seen publicly enjoyed by celebrities, athletes, and politicians. In that time, the coconut water market size rose to \$1.1 billion in 2019, and it's expected to rise to \$3.2 billion by 2027.

However, real nutritional benefits may be why cactus water is rising in popularity.

For one, cactus water has nearly half the sugar content of coconut water. Second, several studies have suggested that cactus water isn't just good for hydration — it's also good for lowering inflammation and blood sugar, and it can help you recover after a hangover. That's right: A 2013 study published in the journal *Experimental and Toxicologic*

Pathology suggests that prickly pear cactus can help reduce oxidative

stress in rats that is caused by alcohol consumption. This could be because cactus water is packed with antioxidants!

Another reason for its popularity is that cactus water looks as good as it tastes. The drink's pink tint comes from betalain pigments also seen in beets. These pigments have anti-inflammatory properties, which help reduce swelling, especially after a hard workout.

Speaking of a workout, apparently cactus water can even provide an energy boost before you start your gym session. Nikki Ostrower, nutritionist and founder of NAO Wellness, says, "Prickly pear has taurine, a powerhouse antioxidant that gives us a plethora of energy to enhance athletic performance and cognitive function."

Of course, this evidence gained public attention after the rise of Pricklee cactus water, but how in the world did they decide to pursue cactus water in the first place?

The Pricklee Story

When Mo Hassoun traveled to visit his childhood home in Lebanon, he was reminded of summers spent drinking cactus water with his grandmother. He came back home to Boston and shared the drink with his four close friends, who were fellow students and aspiring pharmacists. When Mo promised them it tasted like watermelon and bubblegum, they didn't believe him — until they tried it for themselves.

They instantly knew they'd stumbled onto something special and began researching the health benefits, discovering many of the facts mentioned here. They saw this as a clear sign that cactus water was delicious, and it could turn the coconut water industry upside down. That bold attitude led the five of them to create unique online and in-person marketing campaigns, including a loyalty membership program called the Anti-Coconut Club, and run around Boston in cactus costumes, passing out free cactus water.

In just one year, their five-person team — completely new to the world of consumer packaged goods — figured out the logistics, ingredient sourcing, flavor development, branding, and manufacturing all before launching their first cactus water product.

"The concept of cactus water in 2021 is absolutely bubbling up," Kun Yang, CEO and co-founder of Pricklee, told Thrillist. "Vanessa Hudgens launched her cactus water in April ... People are really looking for plant-based hydration, and cactus water is something new to add to their diet."

Cactus water might have paved the way for new plant water entrants, but for now, thanks to the bold career shifts, marketing strategies, and research efforts of Pricklee's founders, it looks like cactus water is here to stay.

Inside

- 1 How to Accomplish Your Goals in 2022
- 3 Cash Flow Slowing Down? 5 Tactics to Pick Up Business Now!
- 4 Employee Recognition Helps Retention
- 5 6 Steps to a Social Media Overhaul
- 6 Shutterstock: A New Campaign

Resource of the Month:
Vimeo

