Setting Your Goals For The New Year

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Another year is coming to a close. It's a time for holiday parties, family gatherings and - for those of you in daycare - a busy Christmas week in boarding. With so much going on, you can easily get caught up in it all and forget to put some thought into what this time means for your business.

As you're celebrating with the fat man in red and ringing in the New Year, don't forget that this is an important time in your business that needs some attention. You're closing out 2021 and launching a brand new year, with new possibilities – if you are ready for them.

In between ugly Christmas sweater parties and New Year's hangovers, you need to set aside a few hours to do 2 very important things: 1) assess your previous year and 2) create a plan to make 2022 the very best year for your business.

Every December I clear my schedule for a day and take a detailed look at everything that happened over the last 12 months and see how I did in achieving all my goals that I set in January of 2021. This is **CRITICAL** to making all your dreams a reality. I don't care how busy you are this month. You need to do this.

I used to think I didn't really need this or would just whip through it quickly, not realizing that by phoning it in I was setting my new year up to be a disappointment. If you don't know what you did or didn't do this past year and what your detailed plan will be to make things happen for the new year, you'll continually be stuck in the same place, year after year.

I know. I did this for a time. It sucked.

If you find yourself getting frustrated and down around this time of year as you look back at the goals you set in the beginning of the year and realize your business is no further along than it was last January, you're probably guilty of skipping this super important process.

Since I started spending more time looking back on what transpired during the last year AND making sure I understood exactly why I did or didn't achieve my goals - PLUS got very intentional about what I want to accomplish this coming year AND making a detailed plan of how I was going to make it all come true - my results have skyrocketed.

Now every year has been my best year ever. Every year I'm moving my business forward and seeing success like never before. I don't hit all my goals, but I'm coming damn close, and now I'm always pumped for a brand new year.

So, let's get your business in order and set up for an amazing launch to your 2022.

Assessing the Past Year

I always try to start everything with gratitude. The first thing I do every single morning before I get out of bed is take a moment and think of all the things I'm thankful for. It really primes my mindset for the day and enables me to appreciate all that I have, instead of looking for all the problems.

You want to do that as well when you're assessing your previous year. Before you dig in deep to what you fell short on or where you need improvement, take some time to recount some of your wins over the last 12 months. What went right? What accomplishments did you and your business have? Where did you shine?

Think about everything that was positive this past year, celebrate it and be grateful for the success. I firmly believe that gratitude is a superpower (which is probably why I wear a necklace with the word on it) and can do amazing things for your attitude as well as help open you up for future good things.

Once that's done, look back at the goals you set at the beginning of 2021. Hopefully you wrote them down and can refer back to what you stated you wanted when the year began. Writing down your goals is crucial to you actually achieving them. If you don't declare what you want in writing, it's not a goal – it's just a wish in your head. Wishes are not really tangible and much less likely to happen. A goal that's in writing, however, is a contract to yourself and something that your mind takes more seriously.

Don't get me wrong, just writing your goals down will not magically make them happen. But it's the first step to making it happen and something that will make the next steps (which we'll get to in a minute) easier and happen quicker.

So if you wrote your goals down in the beginning of the year, get them out so we can see how you did. If you didn't write them down, then try to think back and remember exactly what you wanted to accomplish this year.

It's very important to take this time to reflect back on how you wanted the year to go so we can then determine how you did, which will help us when we're creating next year’s goals.

Once you've looked back on how you did with your big goals of the past year, it's time to get into the nitty gritty. You need to focus on a few metrics and track them, year after year, as they relate to your goals and as a good indicator of how your business is doing over time.

Here's what you need to look at:

1. **Income** – How much money did your business bring in this year?
2. **Expenses** – How much did you have to spend on stuff you needed?
3. **Revenue** – How much money did you make? (The profit you made from your business (income – expenses = revenue))
4. **Staff turnover** – How many employees left or were let go?
5. **New Customers** – How many new clients were acquired?
6. **Customer Retention** – How many customers, both new and existing, came back for repeat business?

There may be more for your individual business, depending upon what your personal business is, but these should be standards for just about everyone.

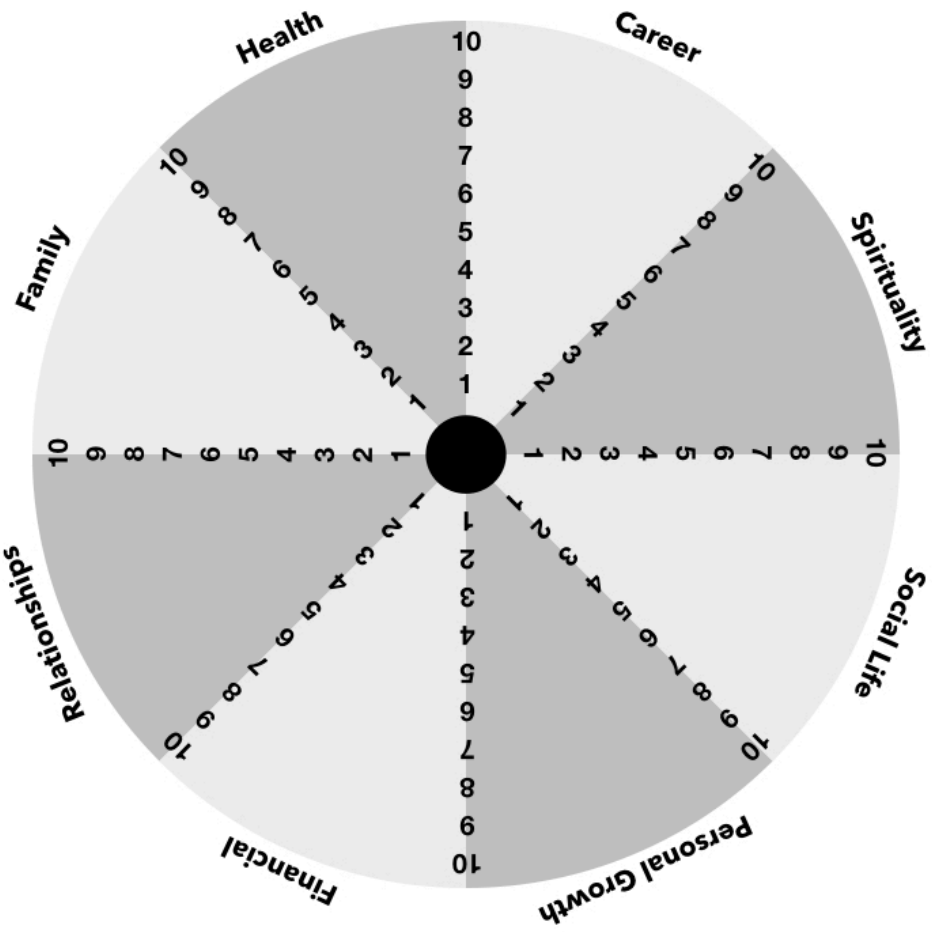
Write all these numbers down, along with any others you want to track, in a notebook or in a document on your computer (Google Docs are great for this kind of stuff). Then, when you're repeating this process 1 year from now, you can refer to these and track how you're doing year to year and over a long period of time.

Now, take a look at these numbers and decide if you're happy with them. Are they where you hoped they would be? Any surprises? What takeaways do you have, looking back on the past year's numbers?

Last year’s numbers will help you determine next year’s goals, what you need to improve upon and where you might need to get some help to change

things. ***If you don't know where you are, you'll never be able to set a course for where you want to go.***

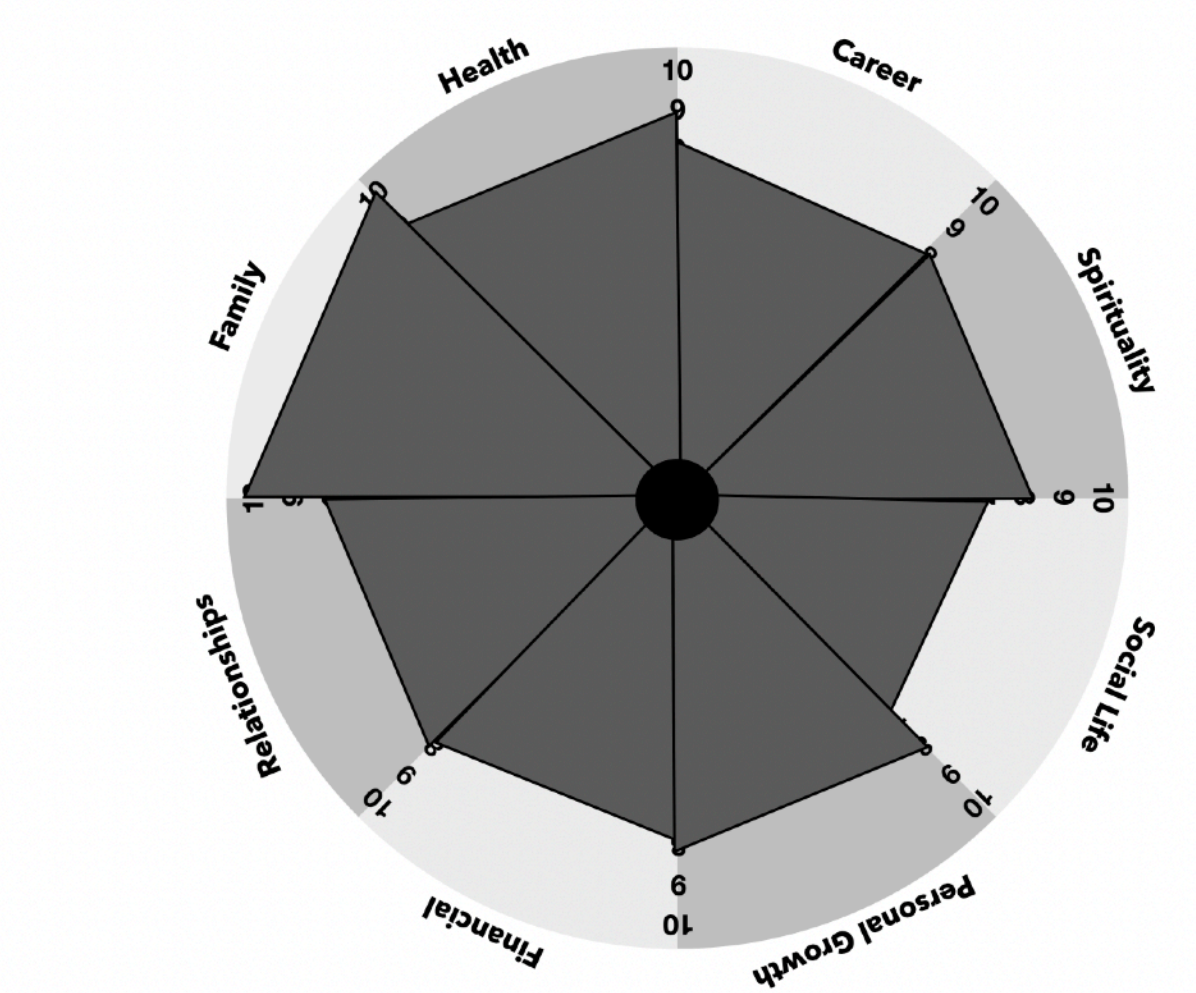
There is a popular tool called "The Wheel of Life" commonly used by life coaches, which helps you assess where you need improvement. It looks like this:



The way this works is you rate each area of your life from 1 – 10, with 1 being not so good and 10 being awesome. On each section, you draw a line across each area at the corresponding number. When you're done with all of them, you'll see where the "dents" are in your wheel – those are the areas that need the most work.

Ideally you'd like everything to be maxed out at 10, which would create a nice round wheel that will easily roll you through the next year of your life. However, I've never met anyone who has hit 10's in every area of their life because, no matter how good you're doing, there's always something that could use a little improvement.

Here's what my current life assessment looks like:



Looking at this, I get a simple yet clear visual representation of what I need to focus on to improve my overall life happiness. I can see that I'm doing pretty great in my health, with my family and my career is on track, however, I need to

get out more socially, build more and better relationships and increase my income a bit.

It's great to know this as I make my goals and set my course for the new year. I now have a basic view of what's going well and what areas I need to give a little more attention to. All areas of the wheel are important and need attention. Focusing on one at the expense of another will make your wheel lopsided, resulting in less happiness and fulfillment overall.

I recommend you fill in your own Wheel of Life to help you assess and plan your personal growth for the new year.

Next, we'll adapt this for your business – all we need to do is adjust the headings.

Income – How much money you're brining in

Profit – What you make after expenses

Staff – Quality and retention of employees

Business Relationships – Other local businesses you know and collaborate with

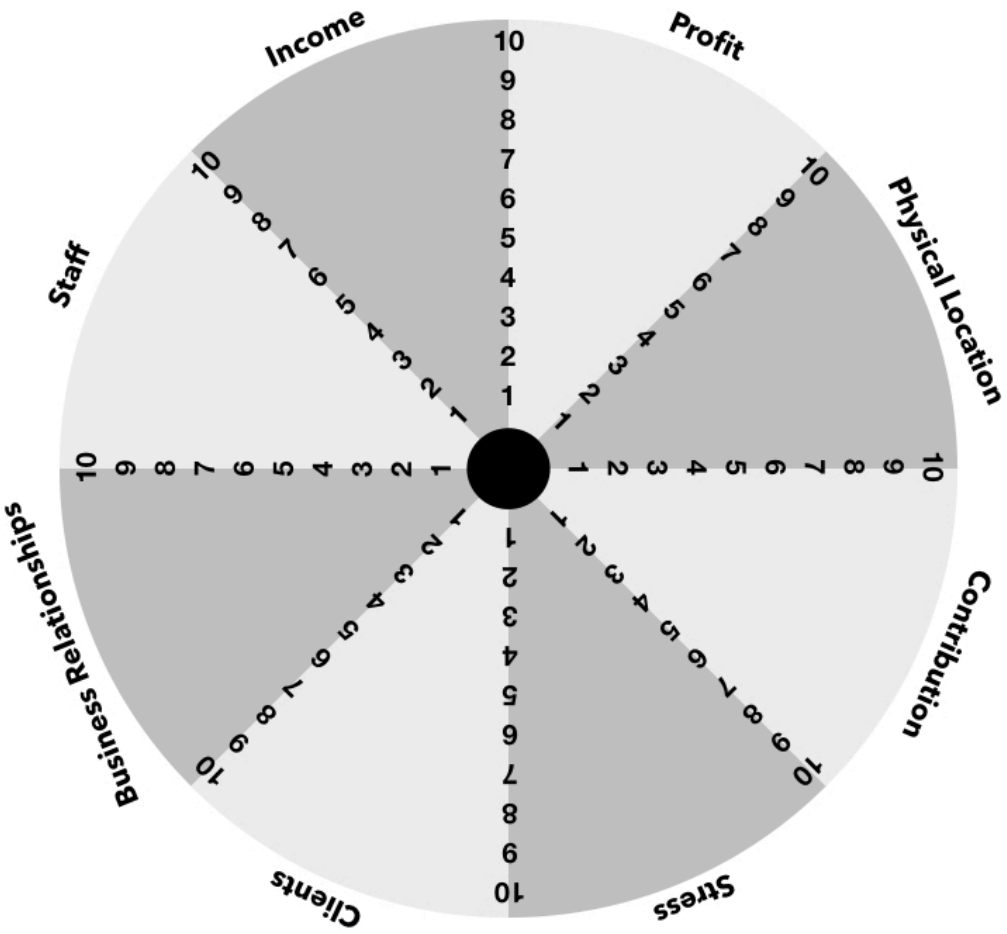
Physical Location – The condition and appearance of your business

Clients – Number of and how much you like them

Contribution – Giving back to the community

Stress – How crazy holding everything together makes you

Fill in the Dog Business Wheel below now:



Now that you've filled it in, what do you see? Notice any big dents in your wheel? You should now know exactly what areas of your business need some attention this coming year.

Remember that all areas are relevant and important. You can't have a long lasting, happy business without working on all the different aspects in your business life.

Setting Your Goals for The New Year

Okay, you've looked back on last year, recorded all your yearly numbers and figured out where you need the most improvement. You're all set to plot your path for the new year.

I love this part. I'm always so excited at the start of a new year because, no matter how you did last year, it's a great mental blasting off point of unlimited possibilities. If you didn't do as well last year as you had hoped, you've got a brand new year to do things differently and make the coming year awesome. If you had a good year, you get to build on that and take your business to new levels of success - never before experienced - this coming year.

No matter where you were, you can make this year better. The possibilities are endless. ***You can make anything happen for you and your business this coming year if you set the goal, plan it out and take the necessary action.***

So let's set those goals.

You may have a ton of things you want to accomplish, but if you set too many goals, your energy and efforts will be too diluted to get much done. I think it's better to focus on 3 big goals and give it everything you've got, instead of trying to work on a bunch of things halfheartedly.

So, let's decide on 3 main things you want to accomplish in your business this coming year. Think about what success would look like for you 12 months from now. If it was one year from now and you're doing your yearly analysis, what would had to have happened for you to be overjoyed with your results?

Really think of all the things you would like to do in your business over the next year and then whittle down the list to your BIG 3. Be as detailed as you can as you explain the outcomes you want to achieve. I also want you to write them in the past tense as if you've already accomplished them all. This may seem like a trivial thing to do, but it a pulls a powerful level in your subconscious that will push you to making it happen.

Once you have them in writing, take five minutes and imagine exactly what it will be like to have achieved each one. What will it mean for your business? How will it make you feel? What will it look like? Use your creativity to paint a mental picture of how cool it's going to be now that all 3 of these are a reality.

Writing down your goals is good, but that alone is not likely to make much happen. The next question we need to answer is, **how are you going to make them happen?**

Without a plan to lead to achieving these goals, they will remain just wishes that you have no control over. Wishes suck. Wishes are just hopes that you have no control over. Goals, however, are totally under your control – if you map out a plan to make them happen.

So in this next part, I want you to write down exactly what you're going to do to make them happen. What steps do you need to take? What skills do you need to learn? What help do you need to seek?

You're not going to have all the details figured out right now, but you need a starting off point so you know what quarterly, monthly, weekly and daily actions you need to be taking so those goals turn into realities.

Write down your goals and action plan now.

GOAL 1: _____

_____

What you need to do to make this happen: _____

_____

_____

GOAL 2: _____

_____

What you need to do to make this happen: _____

_____

_____

GOAL 3: _____

_____

What you need to do to make this happen: _____

_____

_____

The last step of this process is to create your timeline as to when things are going to happen. This is important because you want to be able to measure your progress over the next 12 months and know how you're doing so you can adjust as necessary. Think of it as checkpoints on your journey, where you can

consult your map, make sure you're where you should be and adjust your course if you've gotten off track.

I like to break things down quarterly here. Write down where you should be on the path to accomplishing your goals in 3, 6, 9 and 12 months.

GOAL 1

March 31 _____

_____

_____

June 30 _____

_____

_____

September 30 _____

_____

_____

December 31 _____

_____

_____

GOAL 2

March 31 _____

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June 30 _____

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September 30 _____

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December 31 _____

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GOAL 3

March 31 _____

_____

_____

June 30 _____

_____

_____

September 30 _____

_____

_____

December 31 _____

_____

_____

Now you are ready to take the new year by storm. You know exactly where you want to go and exactly how you're going to get there. There is no mystery – yo have the plan. It's a done deal. YOU WILL HAVE THE BEST YEAR EVER!

Now that the plan is done, it's time to get to work. No one is going to do this for you – it's all up to you to make it happen. And you can. You know what needs to be done. All you have to do is go do it.

It may seem like a lot, but remember, you're not alone in this. I'm here to help you any way that I can along the way.

This process of assessing the last year and setting your goals for next year is your pre-launch checklist; getting you ready for an amazing flight this year. You're fueled up and ready to go. All you have to do is hit ignition on January 1st and keep working to stay on course.

I would say “good luck” but I don't really believe in luck – just hard work and determination.

Happy New Year and here's to your best year ever!