

## Kanban Foundation

The principles and general practices that underlie all Kanban implementations.

Kanban General Practices

Foundational Principles of Kanban

Kanban Change Management Principles

Kanban Service Delivery Principles

Class of Service Archetypes

Resources

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## Kanban General Practices

The General Practices of Kanban define essential activities for those managing kanban systems. There are six of them.

Groups: Establish Feedback Loops,

Improve Collaboratively, Evolve Experimentally,

Limit Work In Progress (WIP),

Make Policies Explicit. Manage Flow and Visualize

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## Visualize

Show work and its flow, visualize your risks and build a visual model that reflects how you actually work.

**Do's**

Visualize all your work on widely visible Kanban Boards that accurately reflect where you are, the risks you face and how you work.

**Dont's**

Don't hide your work and your way of working. Don't pretend you work in a way that you don't.

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## Make Policies Explicit

The practice of defining agreements on how the service delivery will be handled. Examples include replenishment criteria, pull criteria, WIP limits, classes of service and others as appropriate.

**Do's**

Agree to explicit policies for your workflow and regularly review and modify them as needed. Follow the policies without exception.

**Dont's**

Don't create policies without the team's agreement.

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## Limit Work In Progress (WIP)

Stop starting, start finishing! We want to limit work in progress to enable a pull system to improve predictability and flow.

Experiment and tune your WIP limits. Only accept work into the Kanban System when there is capacity – pull don't push. Use WIP limits to improve focus and increase collaboration.

**Do's**

**Dont's**

Don't allow work to be pushed onto the team. Don't start something new when you could use the effort to finish something else.

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## Establish Feedback Loops

A feedback loop starts with feedback information about the existing system and requires action based on whether the result is in line with the desired goals or not.

**Do's**

Use cadence-based events to gather regular feedback, share experiences and improve collaboration. Base your decisions on the data gathered.

**Dont's**

Don't turn feedback loops into reporting meetings. Don't ignore, or forget to collect, the core Kanban Metrics. Don't create new cadences when an existing one can be redirected.

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## Manage Flow

Focus on managing the flow of the work to be smooth and predictable, resulting in potentially faster and more efficient delivery.

**Do's**

Maintain a sustainable pace. Use data to manage expectations, create credible forecasts and drive improvements. Take your commitments seriously. Pull work.

**Dont's**

Don't allow work to build up and clog the system. Don't ignore WIP limits or agreed service levels. Don't allow badly formed work items into the system. Push work.

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## Improve Collaboratively, Evolve Experimentally

Perform hypothesis-driven change using the scientific method. Evolve your way-of-working through a series of collaborative, safe-to-fail experiments.

**Do's**

Use data to guide the evolution of your way-of-working. Design small safe-to-fail experiments to try out improvements so if they fail you can easily revert to your prior state.

**Dont's**

Don't change too much at once. Don't ignore the results of your experiments. Don't force change on people.

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## Official Guide to the Kanban Method

Discover the Kanban Method through this short introductory guide that explains all the key concepts of the method in a simple easy-to-read format.


Visit [kanban.university/kanban-guide/](https://kanban.university/kanban-guide/)

### Foundational Principles of Kanban

There are six foundational principles of Kanban, which may be divided into two groups: the change management principles and the service delivery principles.

Groups:

- Kanban Change Management Principles and
- Kanban Service Delivery Principles




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### Kanban Change Management Principles

Your organization is a network of individuals, psychologically and sociologically wired to resist change. Kanban acknowledges these human aspects with three change management principles.

Groups:

- Encourage Acts of Leadership,
- Gain Agreement and
- Start With What You Do Now




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### Start With What You Do Now


Always start from your current way-of-working - **as actually practiced** - and evolve from there while respecting existing roles, responsibilities and job titles.

 We take ownership of our way-of-working, respect our colleagues as highly skilled knowledge workers and work together to constantly improve our way-of-working.

 We favor revolution over evolution. We have process people to define all our practices which we then ignore whilst working and blame when we fail.

One of three :

- Kanban Change Management Principles




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### Gain Agreement


... to pursue improvement through evolutionary change. Sustainable change is only achieved through evolution and with the agreement of the team.

 We embrace change and regularly perform evidence-based experiments to continuously improve our way-of-working.

 We have change forced upon us and are often expected to adopt new ways-of-working that replace rather than build on what we do now.

One of three :

- Kanban Change Management Principles



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### Encourage Acts of Leadership


... at all levels. Leadership is not a position or title. It is action and example. Sustainable change requires ownership being taken at all levels of an organization.

 We are all leaders. We all respect one another, and we all perform acts of leadership to continuously improve our way-of-working.

 Our culture is command and control. We are expected to just follow orders and are punished if we step out of line.

One of three :

- Kanban Change Management Principles



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## Kanban University

**Advance Your Kanban Knowledge**  
Get official certified training from Kanban University. Discover how to help teams, coaches, managers, and leaders to utilize the Kanban Method to grow and improve their business.





Visit [kanban.university](http://kanban.university)

### Kanban Service Delivery Principles

Any sizable organization is an ecosystem of interdependent services. Kanban acknowledges this with three service delivery principles, applicable not just to one service but to the entire network.

Groups:


- Manage the Work,
- Regularly Review the Network and
- Understand and Focus



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### Understand and Focus

... on the customer's needs and expectations. If you place your own goals ahead of your customer's, you will not succeed. Our purpose is to serve and delight our customers. We are only successful when they are successful, their needs and expectations are at the heart of everything we do.

 We are the experts, and we know best. If only those pesky customers would leave us alone and do what they're told, we could be the best team in the world.

One of three :

- Kanban Service Delivery Principles



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### Manage the Work

...let workers self-organize around it. For any form of complex work, self-organizing teams are proven to be more adaptable, committed, and productive than teams that are told what to do and how to do it.

 We organize and manage ourselves. As a team we decide who does what and when.

 We are micro-managed and are only allowed to work on things assigned to us.

One of three :


- Kanban Service Delivery Principles





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### Regularly Review the Network

...and its policies to improve outcomes. An organization is an organic entity consisting of a network of services, each of them living, breathing and evolving. The interconnections must be regularly reviewed and adapted to improve flow.

 We always look at the network in its entirety, considering all aspects, to optimize the whole workflow for the benefit of all.

 We don't look at the whole network at all. When making improvements we only focus on our area and improving things for ourselves.

One of three :  Kanban Service Delivery Principles

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**KMM Plus**  
Kanban Maturity Model



**A MAP TO ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY, RESILIENCE & REINVENTION**  
Visit [kmm.plus](http://kmm.plus)

### Class of Service Archetypes

Kanban uses four archetypes to characterize how the value of items changes with delay: expedite, fixed date, standard and intangible.

These archetypes may be used to assist in ordering work items, or they may define different **classes of service**, where different policies are applied to different types of work.

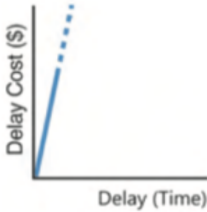
Groups:  Expedite,  Fixed Date,  Intangible and  Standard

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### Expedite

There is a critical and immediate high cost of delay. Select these items before anything else. They can exceed WIP limits and take precedence over other work.



EXPEDITE


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### Fixed Date

The cost of delay goes up significantly after the deadline; start early enough and dynamically prioritize to ensure on-time delivery. Fixed Date items have high impact but only if you miss the deadline.



FIXED DATE

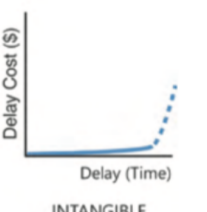
One of four:  Class of Service Archetypes

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
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### Intangible

The cost of delay may be significant but is not incurred until much later; it is low or non-existent in the short-term. The items are important but not urgent, pick when convenient or when there are no Expedite or Fixed Date items in the pool of work.



INTANGIBLE

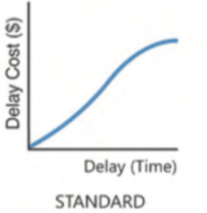
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### Standard

The cost of delay is approximately linear to start with and tails off or cuts off as the opportunity loses value. They should therefore be done as soon as possible. Items are picked on the magnitude of the cost of delay and/or in their arrival order.



STANDARD

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### MOVE FROM PROCESS TO PRACTICES



- Get started with IJI's Library of Practices
- Ready to go practices to get you up and running quickly

[ivarjacobson.com/practicelibrary](http://ivarjacobson.com/practicelibrary)

### IJI PRACTICE WORKBENCH

- Compose and publish your own methods with IJI's Practice Workbench
- Create print-ready cards or export to HTML

[ivarjacobson.com/practice-workbench](http://ivarjacobson.com/practice-workbench)

 <h2>IJI SUSTAINABLE CHANGE FRAMEWORK</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achieve consistent and lasting adoption of your agile techniques across your broad communities of practices!</li><li>• IJI's Framework and Consulting Services can help guide you.</li></ul> <p><a href="https://ivarjacobson.com/sustainable-agile-transformation">ivarjacobson.com/sustainable-agile-transformation</a></p>	<h2>Resources</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Kanban Method:</b> Kanban Foundation is based on <b>The Official Guide To The Kanban Method</b> available at <a href="https://kanban.university/resources/">https://kanban.university/resources/</a></li><li>• <b>Practice Content Copyright:</b> This Practice is copyright © 2022 Mauvius Group and Ivar Jacobson International SA.</li></ul> <p>  <b>Kanban University</b> Designed using IJI Essence in Practice Workbench™</p> <p>1.0</p>
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