

SAFe® PO/PM Principles And Core Values

Use the SAFe® Principle Cards

...to quickly understand the ten immutable Lean-Agile principles that SAFe is based on.

Play games with these cards to engage with the SAFe Principles for learning and assessment purposes.

Play the ranking game, the assessment game or even invent your own. Go to ivarjacobson.com for further instructions.

"Show me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn..."
BEN FRANKLIN

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#1 SAFe® Principle: Take an Economic View

...to sustain and grow your business.

All outstanding work (whether it has been started or not) should be sequenced to minimize the cost of delay. Sunk costs should be ignored to ensure the maximum business benefit is generated from the money about to be spent.

Stop Starting, Start Finishing

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#2 SAFe® Principle: Apply Systems Thinking

...to make informed choices.

To optimize the flow of value we must adopt a holistic approach that treats our solutions and our enterprises as systems generating value. Systems thinking allows us to understand the nature of why things are the way they are and how we can improve them.

Stamping out fires is a lot of fun, but it is only putting things back the way they were." W. EDWARDS DEMING

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#3 SAFe® Principle: Assume Variability, Preserve Options

...to allow us to respond to change now, next year and beyond.

We live in an uncertain, ever changing world; a world in which nothing can be frozen by force of will alone. To handle uncertainty, and maximize benefit, we must be able to respond to change and keep our options open for as long as possible.

Just Enough, Just In-Time

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#4 SAFe® Principle: Build incrementally with fast, integrated learning cycles

...to reduce risk, gain knowledge, manage expectations and ensure you get the best result.

The best way to learn is by doing; and then getting fast feedback on what you've done. When building systems the feedback that counts is generated by the demonstration of a working system.

Minimum Viable Releases;
Minimum Marketable Features

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#5 SAFe® Principle: Base milestones on objective evaluation of working systems

...to allow everyone to understand where they are and where they are going.

Organizations need leading indicators of success and failure - indicators that are based on real, not implied, progress; the primary measure of which is working systems

"Our plans miscarry because they have no aim. When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind" SENECA AD64

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#6 SAFe® Principle: Make value flow without interruptions

...to delight your customers and out pace the competition.

Bottlenecks and impediments must be detected and eliminated as quickly as possible. Effective flow can only be achieved if all work is visible, hand-offs are minimized, and queues, batch sizes and the amount of work in progress (WIP) are kept under control.

Safely and sustainably reduce lead time to "Thank You"
Daniel Terhost-North

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#7 SAFe® Principle: Apply cadence, synchronize with cross-domain planning

...to encourage collaboration, gain commitment, reduce risk and eliminate waste.

There is more value in overall alignment than individual excellence. The best way to gain alignment, facilitate trade-offs, control variability, reduce dependencies and synchronize the teams' efforts is to get everyone to plan together (face-to-face) on a regular heartbeat.

Collaboration not dependency

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#1

SAFe® Principle: Take an Economic View



The backlog is prioritized with the stakeholders using cost of delay and relative estimates of size. Incomplete Features are re-estimated and re-prioritized every PI.



The HiPPOes rule – it's my backlog and I set the priorities only adjusting them when someone more important overrules me. Once work is started then it is never stopped.

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#4

SAFe® Principle: Build incrementally with fast, integrated learning cycles



We frequently talk to the teams and attend demonstrations to reduce risk, gain knowledge, adjust scope and manage expectations.



We hand the Features over to the team during PI planning and wait for all the stories to be complete and the Feature to be show-cased at the system demo before providing our feedback.

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#3

SAFe® Principle: Assume Variability, Preserve Options



We only prepare enough Features for the next PI, keeping the descriptions light and leaving it up to the teams to help us find and evolve the stories. We evaluate new ideas as and when they arrive.



We prioritize, detail and freeze the whole backlog as early as possible. We get everything signed off so if it's wrong it is someone else's fault. We rigidly stick to these decision even if we know there are better options.

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#2

SAFe® Principle: Apply Systems Thinking



Improvements and enablers are interleaved with business features to ensure we develop the right solution in the right way.



Improvements and enablers never make the cut as it's my backlog and I want more of my business features, and I want them now.

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#7

SAFe® Principle: Apply cadence, synchronize with cross-domain planning



We regularly meet together with our peers to create a single, shared, collaborative plan.



Our teams plan on their own with no regard for what others are doing. Coordination is chaotic and when things go wrong it is always someone else's fault.

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#6

SAFe® Principle: Make value flow without interruptions



We prepare and plan just enough Features for each PI. Our teams are in Flow: they pull Features during the PI planning event and never work on more than two Features at a time.



We sign-off all the Features needed for a Release before work starts. We allocate them to the teams so they can start work on them all as soon as possible. To ensure full utilisation we always have three releases of Features committed in our backlog.

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#5

SAFe® Principle: Base milestones on objective evaluation of working systems



We witness story and feature demos every day striving for minimal viable features and early releases. We measure progress by the value of the system increments.



We select all the Features and Stories for each release up front. We expect things to be delivered to the initial estimate and track progress by using traditional sign-offs and variance from the original plan.

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#8

SAFe® Principle:

Unlock the intrinsic motivation of knowledge workers

...to realize the organization's full potential by enabling them to reach their full potential.

Systems development is knowledge work, where the people who do the work know more about how to do it than their managers. They arrive motivated to succeed. They will do their best and can be trusted to do things in the right way for both the product and the business.

Develop teams and people, they develop the products

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#9

SAFe® Principle:

Decentralize decision-making

...to create empowered teams and enable them to succeed without unnecessary delays or constraints

The most effective teams are those that are empowered to make their own decisions, and allowed to move quickly to address opportunities, issues and problems as and when they encounter them.

Centralize strategy, localize execution

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#10

SAFe® Principle:

Organize Around Value

...to deliver quickly and sustainably whilst seamlessly adapting to new opportunities.

Our goal is to deliver value with the shortest sustainable lead-time, whilst continuously sensing and responding to the changing needs of our customers. To do this we must organize around value and place the customer at the heart of everything we do.

"There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company ... by spending his money somewhere else." SAM WALTON

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SAFe® Core Value:

Alignment

"There is more value in overall alignment than individual excellence."

Don Reinertson

We know exactly why we are here and how we contribute to the program / business / product / solution vision.

We have no idea why we are here and our so-called 'mission' is completely unclear.

SAFe® Core Value:

Transparency

"A lack of transparency results in distrust and deep sense of insecurity"

Dalai Lama

We are open and honest about everything we do and share the progress and health of our work in a way that is available for all to see.

We don't like to share what's really going on for fear of judgement and retribution of others; we feel we are measured on performance.

SAFe® Core Value:

Respect for People

"First we build people, then we build cars"

Fujio Cho,
former Chairman, Toyota

We treat our colleagues and stakeholders with respect and receive their respect in return.

We don't respect anybody inside or outside our team.

SAFe® Core Value:

Relentless Improvement

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to have changed often."

Winston Churchill

We persistently and unceasingly work to improve our way of working and the resulting products to ensure the best results.

We don't change anything unless we are made to. Things may be bad now, but they can always get worse.

#10

**SAFe® Principle:
Organize
Around Value**

We are organized around value and engage with our customers around outcomes. Our backlogs are aligned to, and intuitively make sense to, our business.



We align our backlogs to the technical components of the business solution. Our stakeholders need expert advice to figure where to place, and how to decompose, their requests.

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#9

**SAFe® Principle:
Decentralize
decision-making**

We allow the teams to decide what to do, which Features to work on, and which Stories are needed. We actively engage in answering their questions and attending demos.



As the content authority it is our job to tell the teams what to do. They should do nothing without our permission and keep their opinions to themselves.

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#8

**SAFe® Principle:
Unlock the intrinsic
motivation of
knowledge workers**

We encourage the teams to take ownership of their Features and come up with innovative and creative approaches to their implementation.



We don't trust the teams we work with. We write all the requirements and hand them over expecting them to be implemented exactly as specified without any wasteful discussion or debate.

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