

SAFe® RTE 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



We relentlessly improve to increase the flow of business value and allow the business to pivot when and where it needs.



Economics is for the Product Manager to worry about. My job is to enforce SAFe® processes even if it means we deliver little or no value.

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#4

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



We integrate and demo every day, and deploy continuously. Everyone has time and space to reflect and improve as a team every Iteration, and as an ART at least once every PI.



We don't have time for retrospectives or demonstrations we're too busy telling everyone what to do. Get it right first time is the least we can ask for.

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#3

SAFe® Principle: Assume Variability, Preserve Options



We help our teams keep their options open until the last responsible moment. No 'waterfalls' for us. We welcome change at all times even after PI planning.



The plan is defined and agreed up front during PI Planning. The program board is sacred – it never changes. If you need a new Feature ... get to the back of the queue.

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#2

SAFe® Principle: Apply Systems Thinking



We consider all aspects of our train (people, process, products and tools) and its interaction with our customers, to optimize, and grow, our value stream.



Our job is to deliver as many Features as we can. On the rare occasion we make improvements we only focus on the internal workings of our development teams.

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#7

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



We ensure everyone regularly meets together to collaboratively plan and align their work. We all share the same cadence so we can pivot and adapt as one team.



We make sure everyone has planned all their work before PI Planning. Collaboration is frowned upon as it increases the amount of string on the program board and distracts the teams from getting the job done.

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#6

SAFe® Principle: Make value flow without interruptions



We make everything visible, at both ART and team levels. We actively limit WIP, deliver Features throughout the PI and complete all our stories within an Iteration.



We pressure teams to start more things even though they never finish anything. Everything is late. Nothing fits in the time-boxes and we never seem to be able to release.

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#5

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



Demos rule. We use actionable measures to show the state of the system, the effectiveness of the ART, and where we are on our roadmap.



We use document sign-off to demonstrate progress. We integrate once a quarter if we're lucky, and our Epics are just waterfall projects in disguise.

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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 continually self-organize to improve the flow of value, grow our capabilities and eliminate dependencies. Our teams adapt their membership and purpose every PI.



I organize my teams around technical specialisations and technological concerns. People go where I tell them and do what they're told.

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#9

SAFe® Principle: Decentralize decision-making



We empower and coach our teams in decision making, and fully support the decisions they make. We actively remove impediments and ensure decisions are made quickly.



As the RTE it is my job to take charge and make the decisions. Teams must follow the defined change control process and ask my permission to change anything, anything at all.

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#8

SAFe® Principle: Unlock the intrinsic motivation of knowledge workers



We give our teams purpose. We work hard to build an environment of trust and psychological safety where everyone feels empowered to contribute, innovate and take risks.



We micro-manage everything and we expect our Scrum Masters to 1) do what they're told and 2) micro-manage their teams on our behalf.

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