

SAFe® 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 pivot without mercy, ignoring sunk costs, and always do the work that will deliver the most value.



We do whatever we are told and once we start something we keep going regardless of whether or not it has any value.

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#4

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



We frequently build and demonstrate our working system to reduce risk, gain knowledge and manage expectations.



We build our system in secret, only bringing the pieces together at the end. We only show it to others when we have finished and hope they are not too upset by the end result.

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#3

SAFe® Principle: Assume Variability, Preserve Options



We always keep our options open as long as responsibly possible so that we can make the best informed decision for the maximum benefit.



We don't like uncertainty or change. We like others to decide everything up front, before we get involved. We then rigidly stick to these decisions even if we know there are better options..

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#2

SAFe® Principle: Apply Systems Thinking



We always look at the big picture, considering all aspects of the product and how it's produced, to optimize the whole value stream for the benefit of all.



We don't look at the big picture at all. When making improvements we only focus on our area and Improving things for ourselves.

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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 have full transparency. We only work on one or two things at a time so that we can predictably finish what we start.



We hide what we are actually working on from others. We start lots of things and although we work hard we never seem to get any of them finished.

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#5

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



We always know where we are. We regularly evaluate our progress by demonstrating and testing our evolving, working system.



We report our progress against a plan that bears little resemblance to the work being done. We hide anything that has gone wrong as long as possible.

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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, constantly collaborating across all the disciplines involved in our value stream to delight our customers and reduce waste.



We are organized around our specialisms and value our own contribution above everyone else's. We resist any changes that would undermine our authority

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#9

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



We empower our teams to make their own decisions as they know best, are closest to the action and can react quickly.



We don't trust any of our people to make any decisions on their own. They need to wait patiently for someone of appropriate seniority to decide for them.

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#8

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



We trust and empower our people. They are self motivating and we clearly benefit from their creativity and enthusiasm.



We don't trust our people. If left alone and allowed to do what they want they would do nothing, nothing at all.

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