

6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFe™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU



6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFe™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU

These days, it seems that scaling Agile is all the rage. And while Agile truly is the best, most efficient and most profitable way to get a great product to market quickly, **scaling Agile is a road filled with potholes and landmines.**

And if you don't do it properly, your product - and your team - can easily end up in a ditch.

So how do you know if SAFe is right for you?

Well... you could hire a team of consultants to go through what would certainly lengthy (and expensive) process to figure it out.

Or you could just **use this simple checklist and find out in a few minutes.**

Just check the boxes that apply to you and add up your score. At the end of this list, we'll tell you what your score means - and whether SAFe truly is for you.

So let's get started..

6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFE™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU

1. Do you really NEED to be Agile?

*Agile is a great framework, but it's not for everyone. So do you even need Agile?
Let's find out:*

- Is there a strong business demand to improve Time to Market?
- Is there a strong business demand to improve Productivity?
- Are there serious IT/product development quality problems/complaints that you are struggling with?
- Is there a serious employee engagement issue that you are looking to address?
- Do you believe Agile is going to be a key ingredient in maintaining/extending your competitive edge or closing up on your competition?

2. Do you need to SCALE your Agility?

*Has your team gotten too big for your current Agile implementation?
(Do you need to achieve the Agility improvements discussed above in one of these contexts.)*

These questions will give you the answer:

- A program/product/system where 1-2 teams are not sufficient to deliver at the pace required by the business.
- A program/product/system where 1-2 teams are not sufficient to maintain the variety of systems/modules/knowledge needed to deliver value in this area.
- Dependencies between teams are repeatedly coming up as a real struggle - causing waste, delays, and frustrations all around.
- It is pragmatically impossible at the moment to solve the majority of the dependencies through reorganizing from component teams to feature teams. Coordinating / Collaborating between different teams seems to be a necessary evil for the foreseeable future.

6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFe™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU

3. Is your organization looking for detailed guidance on how to scale Agile?

Feeling a little lost in trying to scale Agile? See if a helping hand is right for you:

- You prefer concrete prescriptive guidance for how to scale Agile beyond the team level rather than figure it out on your own from books/case studies/creating a custom framework with a consultant.
- You are looking for an approach that has a solid documented track record. This will make you feel safer going into this high impact initiative and will help you convince others.
- You are looking for the “industry standard” which will help you with bringing in experienced practitioners/coaches/trainers, communicating with the wider Agile community, etc.
- You prefer “Buy” over “Make”. For you “Not Invented Here” is an advantage not a turnoff.
- You prefer “Tailor” over “Make”. You are not a big fan of working “by the book” but are looking to leverage a good solid coherent set of best practices that you can work with.

4. Is SAFe Agile Enough for you?

SAFe isn't a one-size-fits-all Agile solution. Check the boxes below to see if SAFe is enough for you.

- Coming from a “Waterfallish” development lifecycle having a planning cycle every 10-12 weeks (every PI) provides sufficient business Agility.
- Replanning at the Feature/Program level every couple of weeks is not required or deemed to be a dysfunction that will be resolved by moving to a steady reliable cadence of 10-12 weeks.
- Delivery cadence will be somewhere around 10-12w. (NOTE: Yes. SAFe does say Deliver on Demand. But typically organizations that deliver every sprint or more often have lots more feedback to use for replanning which will drive them more towards a more frequent planning cycle - leading either to shorter PIs or an alternative more pull-oriented planning approach).

6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFE™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU

5. CAN you implement SAFE? ?

Implementing SAFE is a pretty big commitment. So be honest about whether your organization is ready for it.:

- Are you serious about transforming your organization? SAFE might be SAFE but it's certainly not EASY. It will be hard work.
- Do leaders have the time/motivation to lead this change?
- Do you have authority to drive change in the organization?
- Do you and whoever is relying on the delivery of this development value stream have the patience for a period of slowing down while investing in building the capability to win later on? (Think the sports team that says we are focusing on building the team this year, not aiming for the playoffs/finals, etc.).

6. Are you willing to go for “Big Room Program Increment Planning”?

Can you make it work?

An effective SAFE implementation requires your entire team to participate. Are they up for the challenge?

- Is “Whole program of 50-125 people doing program increment planning together in one big room” sound like something you can undertake every quarter or so?
- Is this something you are open to exploring the value of?
- Is this something you think you can pull off from a logistics perspective?
- If the set of teams that needs to work together is distributed across several locations/timezones - do you have, or can arrange, effective tele-presence solutions to enable these teams to have a “virtual big room” multi-day planning event every quarter or so?

6 WAYS TO TELL IF SAFe™ IS RIGHT FOR YOU

So - is SAFe the right approach for you?

See, we told you that was pretty quick...

Now it's time to find out what your score means. If you checked:

16-25

SAFe is a very good fit for your organization and, with proper implementation, you will definitely see considerable impact on business agility, productivity, quality and overall team happiness/engagement.

For you, It is probably time to get some SAFe training, run an implementation strategy workshop and launch SAFe in an Agile Release Train or even a full Value Stream.

11-15

SAFe still may be a great fit for you. What we typically do with organizations at this level is take a deeper dive and examine your organization a little more closely. This typically means an assessment together with a deeper implementation strategy workshop.

0-10

SAFe may not be the right choice for you, but other Agile frameworks can give you the massive results you're looking for. If the main reason for low scores is centered in the NEED area you're probably either doing well or have some blind spot that you're unaware of that is worth probing for. What we do in these situations is a more generalized Lean/Agile Management Workshop where we figure out the real NEED, understand the Lean/Agile options and help organizations figure out what options are worth pursuing for them.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW WE CAN HELP YOU IMPLEMENT SAFe™
EFFECTIVELY, EFFICIENTLY AND PROFITABLY, CONTACT US
FOR A FREE STRATEGY SESSION:**

safe@agilesparks.com

(857) 250-0479



www.agilesparks.com