The nine Principles of War, as defined in the Army Field Manual FM-3 Military Operations:

| PRINCIPLE | DEFINITION |
| --- | --- |
| Mass | Concentrate combat power at the decisive place and time |
| Objective | Direct every military operation towards a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective |
| Offensive | Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative |
| Surprise | Strike the enemy at a time, at a place, or in a manner for which he is unprepared |
| Economy of force | Allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts |
| Maneuver | Place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power |
| Unity of command | For every objective, ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander |
| Security | Never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage |
| Simplicity | Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and clear, concise orders to ensure thorough understanding |