



Way 21 - Aligned IS plan and project priorities

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For any strategy to succeed, there needs to be consensus amongst the senior management as to what the company as a whole is working towards. Companies [with a well-defined vision outperform](#) those who don't formulate one. The same goes for the implementation of Information Systems, they need to be aligned to the bigger vision and strategy of the organization implementing them.

In order to be able to prioritize the right projects and allocate your resources in the right information projects a vision needs to be formulated. In his 1996 paper on the matter of vision J. Collins identified 3 elements that together account for a company's vision¹:

1. an organization's fundamental reason for existence beyond just making money (often called its mission or purpose),
 - 1.1. Examples: [ING](#), [Ahold](#), [Sony Europe](#), [Sara Lee](#)
2. its timeless unchanging [core values](#),
 - 2.1. Examples: [Merck](#), [Google](#), [Accenture](#), [Microsoft](#)
3. [huge and audacious](#) -but ultimately achievable- aspirations for its own future.
 - 3.1. Examples: [IBM Research](#), [Merck](#), [Ahold](#), [Phillip Morris](#)

In order to formulate the Vision it is best to gather the senior management together in a private, relaxed and informal environment where they can share ideas and formulate a [shared vision](#) of the company. Involving lower levels of management and employees can also be beneficial due to their different view of the organization.

Once these shared visions have been formulated they can be compared to earlier developed lists of projects [Way 20] and/or lists of new future acts and events [Way 19] to prioritize those that will lead to the best utilization of resources within the organization. As Walter Beats said: ["It is generally accepted that one of the key factors for successful IS planning and implementation is the close linkage of the IS strategy with business strategy. However in practice this linkage is not yet well established."](#) Using the above methodology should make sure that implemented projects are aligned with the business strategy

¹ Collins, J. (1996) "Aligning Actions and Values"; Leader to Leader / The Drucker Foundation; Summer (no. 1).