Way 12: Five-phase model to define the proper IS planning approach.

This model defines the state of the Information Strategy of the organization. It can be seen as a continuous lifecycle of the Information Strategy of an organization, where each phase requires a different strategic approach.
This tool is developed to determine the current state of the organizational IT Strategy planning approach, which makes it possible to align the IS planning approach to the current state of the organization. This is important because when an IS Strategy is created without proper alignment the organization is likely to fail.
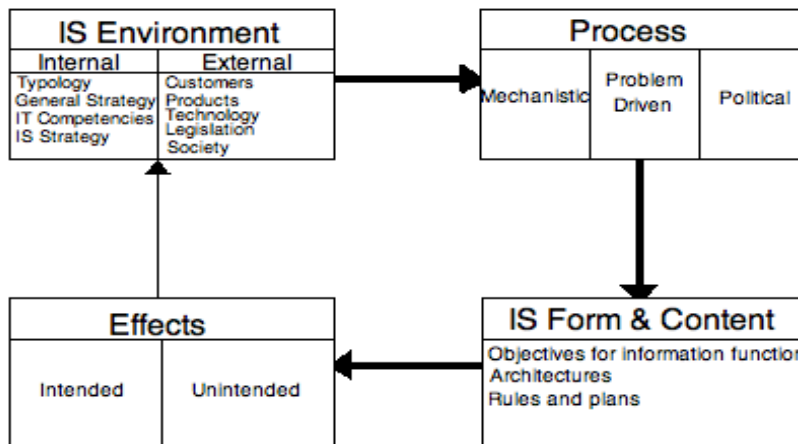
The five phases identified by M.T. Smits and K.G. van der Poel (1996) are:

Turbulence: A specific event arouses strategic interest in IT. Experimentation with new strategies.

Orientation: A new analysis of environment had been made, new goals are formulated and new methods of strategizing are tried.

Consolidation: Formed strategy gets approval of senior management and the new strategy is being laid out through the organization.

Exploration: Organization gets used to new strategy, and efficiency comes into focus; optimizing the procedures.

Tension: Shortcomings and missed opportunities arise and existing structure becomes inadequate.

These phases are identified by considering four "situational influences". These can be seen as four different aspects which are interlinked as shown in the figure on the next page.
The four influences are:
1. IS Environment, where an analysis is made of the internal and external environment of the Information System.
2. Process, three types are distinguished: Mechanistic, Political and Problem Driven
3. IS Form and Plans, here is looked at the architecture and the layout of the IS
4. Effects, these are divided in intended and unintended effects of the Information Planning Strategy

IS Environment

Internal	External
Typology	Customers
General Strategy	Products
IT Competencies	Technology
IS Strategy	Legislation
	Society

Process

Mechanistic	Problem Driven	Political

Effects

Intended	Unintended

IS Form & Content

Objectives for information function
Architectures
Rules and plans

Because of this linkage, organizations tend to move through the phases as the effects of the previous phase initiates the beginning of the next phase whilst the internal environment is changed.

To link the five phases to the four situational influences an overview is made of how the influences characterise each phase:

	Organizational phase				
Information Strategy	Turbulence	Orientation	Consolidation	Exploitation	Tension
Environment					
Shock	Current	Recent	-	-	Imminent
IT competencies	Seeking	Expanding	Expanding	Stable	-
IT awareness	Very High	High	High	Low	-
Process					
Process Type	Political / Problem driven	Political / Mechanistic	Mechanistic	Mechanistic	Problem driven
Methods/tools	No	Yes	Yes	Customized	No
Top management	Very active	Active	Supportive	Low	Growing
Form and content					
Objectives	Focus	Established	-	-	-
Architectures	-	Experimental	Focus	Stable	Outdated
Plans	Tentative	Flexible	Firm	Firm	-
Effects					
Project level	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-
Bottom line	No	No	-	Possibly	-

When the current phase of the organization is identified one should align the approach for Information System planning with the correct phase.