What is the Evaluation Tool?

The proposed new tool is an evaluation tool, for the four-cycle-method (Salmela and Spil, 2002). Managers who work with the four-cycle-method will set their goals in phase one of the method. Thanks to the evaluation tool IS managers will not make the same mistakes when planning new IS implementation processes. This tool evaluates the planning process and ensures deutero learning (Wijnhoven, 1999), so the organization will get on a higher level.

Why is this new tool important?

At this moment the four-cycle-method is a complete process which gives a manager many tools to use when forming and implementing an IS strategy. The work of Samela and Spil (2002) emphasizes a complete circle for e-strategizing, one extra tool which could be useful is the evaluation of the process itself. The four-cycle-method starts with evaluation of previous planning results, the tools which can be used according to the authors are:

1. Information *year report*
2. Information *management control* range
3. List of current and planned projects

These tools are good when evaluating the IS project but not to have a good look at the IS process. To ensure organizational learning it is important to evaluate the IS implementation process. To do this, clear goals have to be set in the first phase. This is already done thanks to step 2 in the first phase; setting planning scope and objectives. But the four-cycle-method does not look back and evaluates these scopes and objectives at the end. Thanks to this tool, deutero learning is ensured and the complete process will get on a higher level each time the four-cycle-method is performed.

When has this tool to be used?

As already explained in short in the previous part, this tool evaluates the process. So it's obvious that the tool should be at the end of the four-cycle-method. There is only one problem: the last phase is the 'the authorizing phase' and according to the definition of this phase an evaluation tool would not fit here. That is why the evaluation tool has to be after the authorizing phase a sort of fifth phase; else the manager wouldn't be able to evaluate the whole IS process, which is iterative in its essence. So, the tool could only be performed at the end of the complete cycle.
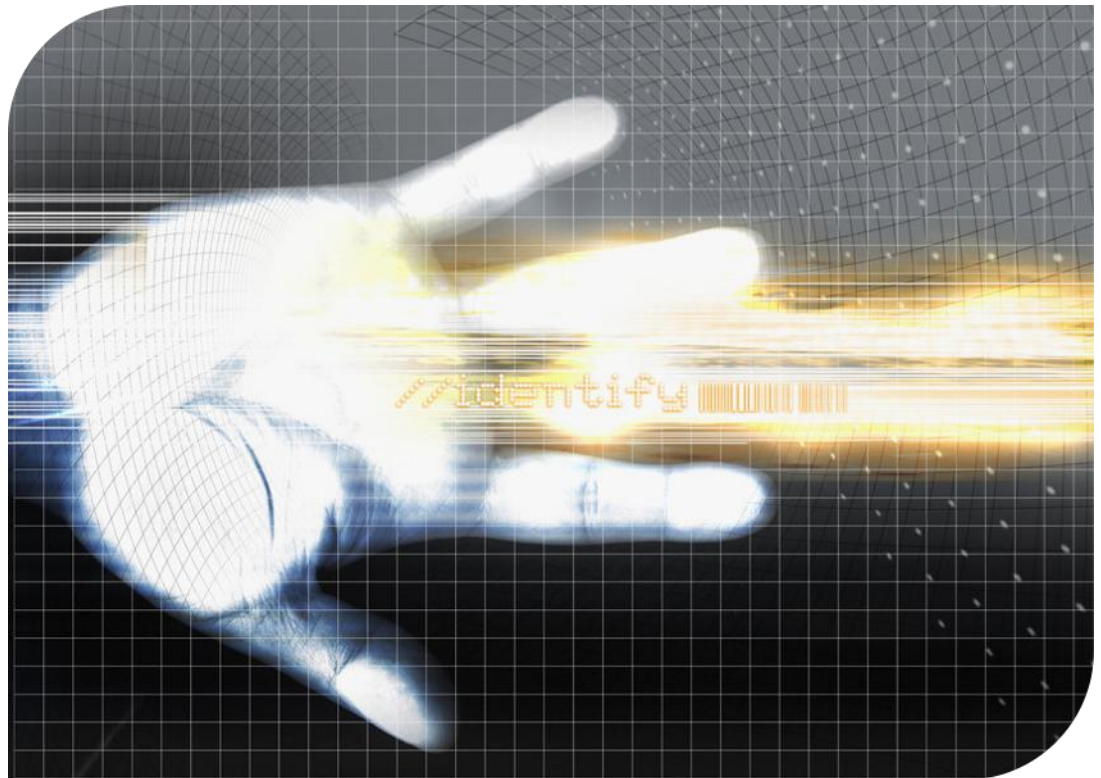
How should the tool be used?
Thanks to the objectives which are set during the first phase, IS managers should be able to look critically at the IS planning process. The manager has to evaluate and rethink the complete four-cycle-method to review the obstacles he encountered during the process. By doing so, the manager and the organization will learn from this (hopefully), so in future projects the same mistakes will not be made again.

Where has the tool to be performed?
The rethinking and evaluating of the IS process can best be done at the office of the IS manager, but location is no critical factor.

Who should be involved?
Most important is the IS manager, because the manager should use this tool to enrich future IS planning processes. But when evaluating the process the manager probably needs input from other persons who where involved during the process. An external advisor could be helpful as well, especially when the level of experience in evaluation is low (so in any case in the first few years of using the four-cycle method). This advisor can assist in determining weaknesses in the strategizing process and in pinpointing opportunities.

References
- Salmela, H,& Spil, TAM (2002), *Dynamic and emergent information systems strategy formulation and implementation, International Journal of Information Management*, 22, pp441-460.
- Wijnhoven, A.B.J.M., (1999), *Managing Dynamic Organizational Memories, instruments for Knowledge Management*, Enschede: Twente University Press

Toolcard

The idea of this Toolcard is to fill in the before, goal and after numbers, while doing the experiment. After the implementation of the IS, the real outcome can be measured and be compared to the Goal and the situation before. When done, the implementation of the IS can be marked with 'good' and 'bad' statements or just simple score numbers as a means of how the IS scored in all aspects and goals.

Four-Cycle Evaluation

Before	*Goal*	*After*
Aspect 1	*Objective 1*	*Measurement 1*
Aspect 2	*Objective 2*	*Measurement 2*
Aspect 3	*Objective 3*	*Measurement 3*

Conclusion
Bad/Good (1)
Bad/Good (2)
Bad/Good (3)