Front-end Analysis
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Joe Harless coined the term "front-end analysis." It is akin to being a performance detective: trying to determine what has happened, is it a crime or something to walk away from, who the culprit is and what to do about it.

Front-end Analysis (or FEA) has several elements to it. They are:

1. Project startup: achieving alignment with the client, setting expectations, getting commitment, getting on the same page, and managing expectations about being transactional.

2. Business analysis: identifying critical organizational goals (priorities), determining what human performance is essential in order to meet those goals, setting evaluation targets, determining the cost of non-compliance or sub-standard performance.

3. Performance analysis: distinguishing between behavior and outcomes, identifying measures, determining what the performance gap is.

4. Key performer: determining who exemplary performers are, analyzing the work of the key performer, task analysis (and further breakdown if necessary).

5. Influence analysis or root cause analysis: determining the cause/root cause of the performance gap. We're not really trying to determine the true "root cause" here—we want to stop when we get to something that is actionable yet won't consist of just slapping a band aid on a serious problem.

6. Information to the client: determining what information the client can handle.