



Course Title

Project Front End Loading (FEL)

Overview

How can we maximise our chances of delivering successful projects? Of the many ways to do this, correcting our front-end loading (FEL) stages probably has the highest impact. Careful planning, wise use of information and good decision making at this early phase have been shown to have greatest influence and least cost. This masterclass will help you to understand why FEL is so important, how to avoid some of the pitfalls and learn best practice, thus enabling improved project outcomes

What You Will Learn from This Course:

- Why good FEL is your best chance to win project success
- The key activities at this part of the project
- How to set your project up to take best advantage of these stages
- How to avoid common mistakes
- Examples of how good and bad FEL practice can impact project outcomes

Why Should You Attend this Course?

Project front-end loading (FEL), sometimes called pre-project planning (PPP), front-end engineering design (FEED) or other terms, is a process for conceptual development of projects, especially in processing industries. It involves developing sufficient strategic information with which stakeholders can address risk and make decisions to commit resources in order to maximize the potential for success.

Generally speaking, projects with high levels of FEL have more predictable costs, shorter schedules and better benefit realisation. Front-end loading includes robust planning and design early in a project's lifecycle (i.e., the front end of a project), at a time when the ability to influence changes in design is relatively high and the cost to make those changes is relatively low.

Conversely, poor or non-existent FEL often leads to missed project goals, low benefit realisation or even outright project failure.

So why do we keep on missing out on this opportunity to set ourselves up for success? And why, even when we do this, do we often not reap the full benefit?

This course will answer these questions, and also give you some tools to help you to do this better.

Starting from a common definition of FEL and review of its components, we will examine key FEL activities, and discover how our technical, commercial, financial, behavioural and cultural approaches can be honed to give us the best outcomes. By looking at examples of both good and bad practice, we will learn from past experience and thus how to avoid common mistakes and build on the success of others.

Finally, if we are already in project execution, we will look at how we overcome mistakes made at the FEL stage.

Not only will project managers benefit from this course, but also those who are key decision makers or are responsible for project outcomes. Further, other related disciplines such as project controls and governance personnel will gain a deeper understanding of FEL, thus helping them to perform better in their own role.

The course is full of practical techniques and examples, with the intention of turning knowledge into practical benefit. The worked examples, case studies and exercises are intended to make applying the knowledge gained much easier.

Finally, the instructor will include opportunities to discuss the real-world problems and issues and questions that are affecting delegates in their own projects and working lives, so that improvements and solutions can be implemented as soon as delegates return to their desks. Often, helpful advice can be gained from the experience of other delegates, and the course setting provides opportunities to do this.

Who Should Attend This Course?

- Project Managers
- Project Team Members
- Project Management Office Staff
- Project Sponsors
- Project Consultants
- Assurance, quality and governance team members
- Senior Decision Makers

Outcome of this Course

By the end of this intensive 4-day course, attendees will be able to:

- Recognise key FEL stages and activities
- Identify FEL risks and shortcomings
- Design a FEL-friendly organisation, culture and decision making
- Use tried and tested behaviours and techniques to improve FEL
- Bake in success by adopting good FEL process
- Deploy options to recover from poor FEL

Course Length

4 days

Course Content

An interactive mix of lecture, case studies, group discussion and activities will be used to illustrate and apply the methods, tools and techniques needed for effective FEL. The following topics will be covered:

Section 1 – Why good FEL is critical to project success

- FEL overview
- Why FEL is so important
- Examples of poor FEL and the consequences
- Which projects and industries benefit most from good FEL

Section 2 – FEL described

- Terminology
- The key phases of the FEL process
- Typical FEL activities at
 - Concept stage
 - Selection stage
 - Definition stage
 - Stage gates

Section 3 – FEL Mistakes, traps and pitfalls

- The pressure to move on
- The pressure to conform
- Lack of belief
- Ambiguity and lack of information
- Organisational (or team) culture and hierarchy
- Stakeholder influence
- Parochialism
- (In)competence and (in)experience
- Poor decision making and bias

Section 4 – Good FEL practice

- Process and planning
- Benefits analysis
- Evaluation – commercial, technical, financial, organisational
- Project context and environment
- Risk management
- Culture and behaviours
- Collaboration and supply chain
- Stakeholder management
- Good decision making – including final investment decision
- Audit and governance
- Gathering and use of information

- Metrics and communication
- Continuous monitoring

Section 5 – Recovering from poor FEL

- Diagnosis
- Solution choice
- Implementation
- Limits
- Learning lessons

Case Studies

- Presentation of real-life examples and case studies of FEL practice in a variety of projects

Practical Exercises

- Worked examples, where delegates participate in groups or teams to analyse FEL problems, issues and solutions.

Summary and Next Steps

- Summary
- Things you can do next
- Reference Material