This course uses the CTU Professional Learning Model™ (CTU PLM) to teach students with hands-on, industry-related, problem-solving experiences that model the professional environment and encourage achievements that lead to student and employer success. The CTU PLM is founded on the idea that students learn best by working on real-world, professional projects related to their chosen career fields. By working this way, students develop the expertise to apply conceptual knowledge to get effective results. Through professional learning, students experience the complexity of real-world problems and learn to select an appropriate approach to a problem that has more than one solution. This method of learning is called Problem-Based Learning (PBL). PBL assumes that you will master content while solving a meaningful problem in each assignment.

Throughout the course, you will work with a scenario in which some basic, background information is provided about a company. (This information could apply to any company that provides products or services of this sort in general.) You have a role in the scenario; that is, you are part of the story. The dialogue in each assignment presents the problem that must be solved. It is up to you to respond to the problem and submit a deliverable that will be graded.

Refer to the following scenario as you progress through the PBL process.

**Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Scenario: Amazing Coffee Houses (ACHs)**

**Company Biography**Amazing Coffee Houses (ACHs) is a small but established company in the coffee industry. It is based in northern Chicago, IL and employs over 100 workers locally in its 10 stores. Its current Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairman of the Board, Sam Ryder, founded the company back in 1994 with his wife, Gloria Ryder. Gloria has served as the company’s Chief Financial Officer (CFO) since it was founded. Both Sam and Gloria graduated from the #1 ranked MBA program in the country and bring a lot of corporate experience to the business. Sam was a Senior Vice President (SVP) in Marketing and Sales at another company for many years before deciding to venture off to start ACHs with his wife. Gloria also worked for that same company and held the position of Finance Director.

The company is known for its own brand of gourmet coffee and low fat donuts, as well as for their own line of stainless steel coffee mugs that are able to keep drinks hot for 12 hours straight. The workforce is comprised mostly of bakers, managers, baristas, greeters, clerks, and cashiers. They also work closely with several large suppliers and distributors in the United States.

**Problem**

The company has a loyal customer base throughout Chicago and is known for its personalized service and quality food and drinks. Because the economic conditions have greatly improved throughout the United States and the company now has a well-established name and brands, ACHs is looking to expand in markets beyond Chicago. The first market it has made a decision to expand into is 81 miles away, Milwaukee, WI. The company has worked through a local real estate agent. Management thinks Milwaukee is where the next 10 stores will be opened. However, Sam and Gloria have never operated a multi-state business before and are worried they will fail to accomplish their expansion goal timely. Sam has made it clear to Gloria that one day, his vision is to take ACHs to every city in America. The expansion will be financed from retained earnings. No additional outside money will be required.

**Opportunity**

Sam has no project management experience and has decided to hire a project manager to manage the expansion project in Milwaukee, WI. After thorough evaluation and dozens of interviews, they have asked Jim Young, a rising star at the company, to take on the role of project manager to lead a team of five people from different departments to create a project plan for the new site.

Jim Young currently serves as a store manager for the biggest two coffee shops. Prior to this role, he worked as a store supervisor for the company. During his time with the company, he has worked on many of the new shop development projects as a team leader and helped to renovate some of the company’s existing shops. People in his business units speak highly of his leadership and coaching style. Though Jim has worked on project teams and supervised functional departments, he has never acted as the project manager before. He knows there are a lot of moving parts in managing a project. He is worried about his ability to lead a new team of people with whom he has never worked before. He is concerned about his lack of experience and knowledge to manage the entire life cycle of a project from start to finish within budget, quality, time, and scope. In previous projects, he remembers Sam and Gloria having differences in budget, scope, and resource allocation, which caused a lot of confusion among the project team members and vendors. Jim is also concerned that their personal relationship will interfere in this project.

You will be working with Jim Young as a project team member with four other professionals in the company. You have only worked at ACHs for 4 years. Prior to your tenure at ACHs, you worked as an associate project manager for a construction company on the West Coast. You have worked on many different projects and are familiar with project management terms, methodologies, tools, and techniques. You earned several certifications relating to project management including a PMP and have an MBA in logistics. Although, you have never worked with Jim Young or anyone else on the new team, you are very excited about the opportunity to make a difference. You are now a stakeholder and your name should appear in the stakeholder analysis.

**Project Background Details**
Amazing Coffee Houses (ACHs) plans to open a new coffee shop that will be located in Milwaukee, WI. We have been able to purchase our own building within the city near Milwaukee’s top tourist attraction site near the Gold Rock Museum. The building is not renovated. Our market analysis of Milwaukee, WI indicated the city is the top city for coffee drinking in WI. Because we’re close to the city’s museum, we plan to become the top destination for local and American and foreign customers who visit Milwaukee each year.

Our customers will have a wide range of coffee flavors to choose from including dark roast to light roast as well as specialty flavors throughout the year. They will also enjoy freshly baked low-fat donuts that aren’t available anywhere in the state. ACHs will hold true to its vision and mission of providing customers with a premier café experience. By creating a new twist for the café experience, ACHs will increase sales by more than $125,000 over the next three years and maintain a gross margin of 70%. The shop is 5,500 square foot of open space. Our plan is to have 2 bathrooms, a coffee bar, and enough tables to seat at least 50 customers. This is a coffee shop that also makes and sells donuts. The renovation must account for all that is needed to get the shop ready for both coffee and donuts.  The project has an initial budget of $650,000. It is now January and Sam and Gloria would like the new location to be up and running on July 4th.
 **Note:** The example companies, organizations, products, people, and events depicted herein are fictitious. No association with any real company, organization, product, person, or event is intended or should be inferred.