Course Overview:
Event planning is a growing, changing industry that allows professionals to employ their communication, marketing, social media, project management skills and more. In this course we will explore the event-planning field through speakers, research, and hands-on experiences.

Prerequisite and requirements:
Students must be willing and able to put in time outside of class to volunteer at an event and contribute to a class project.

Text:
There is no required text. Supplementary readings and resources will be posted to ICON.

Major Assignments:
Major assignment sheets are attached at the end of this syllabus. Each assignment will be discussed in more detail in a timely manner, but here is the gist:

- Attendance, Participation & Professionalism: Your presence, participation, and professionalism are essential to your success in this classroom and in the event planning
field. At two points throughout the semester you will submit a self-evaluation about your performance in these three areas worth up to 15 points each. I also reserve the right to conduct unannounced attendance quizzes for up to 5 points each at any point during the semester. Missed attendance quizzes cannot be made up for any reason. (30+ points)

- **Class Project Participation:** We will plan a real-world event as a class. There will be action steps that need to be taken outside of class. Students can earn up to 50 points by taking on one or more of these tasks and successfully completing it/them. You will document your completion by submitting a description of your tasks and any relevant tangibles to the ICON dropbox. You are also responsible for sharing any tangibles and updates to our event’s Trello board in a timely manner. (50 points)

- **BizBash Daily Reports:** Students will monitor BizBash Daily, an e-newsletter from an industry leader, and will present a highlight on their assigned day. Please submit a brief presentation including a link to your highlight via the ICON dropbox by the start of the class period you’ll present. Please see the assignment sheet for an alternate option. (10 points)

- **Speaker preparation:** You will submit a 3-paragraph bio and 3 questions for each guest speaker by the start of the class period before their visit via ICON. (10 points each)

- **Event Volunteering Experience:** Each student will volunteer at an event. You will report on successes and failures of the event along with your role and the event’s overall organization. You will describe your experience in a visually appealing PowerPoint. (75 points)

- **Individual Event Plan:** You will identify a client in any sector you choose, communicate with the client about their event planning needs or interests, and produce a plan for an event that the client could choose to carry out. We will complete portions of this project as smaller assignments throughout the semester and culminate with a polished, professional PDF document and PowerPoint presentation. (150 points total)

**Grading:**

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**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:**
I aim to make each meeting essential and meaningful, so please plan to attend every session or risk missing out on something important. You cannot be successful in this class (or in the event planning industry) if you are not consistently present and prepared. Out of respect for your classmates and our schedule, please also arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Failing to do so will impact your grade.

Students who must miss class are accountable for all material presented and assignments given during their absence. It is your responsibility to communicate with your classmates to see what you need to know for the next session and to turn in any work that was due during the missed class period prior to the next meeting. In-class work, including attendance quizzes, may not be made up.
Late Work & Early Work
As budding event planners, it’s essential that you meet deadlines with no exceptions. I will accept late work only in extreme circumstances. It is important that you communicate with me as soon as possible if you feel you will miss turning in an assignment and provide adequate documentation to prove your given excuse. Unexcused late work will be docked 10% per day and will not be accepted more than 5 days late.

On the other hand, early work is accepted and celebrated in this course. Event planners must have an excellent sense of what needs to be done when to maximize productivity and success. I’m giving you all of the course assignment details now. If you wish to begin working on your assignments and turn them in before the deadlines, be my guest. Please check in with me and let me know of your plans in case there’s anything you need to know before you dig in.

Workload & In-class work time
The UI College of Liberal Arts guidelines state that each semester hour of class time should entail around two hours per week of outside homework and class preparation for the average student. For example, in our 3 semester hour course, students should expect (on average) 6 additional hours of outside work per week or a total of around 9 hours per course per week if classroom time is included.

Collaboration
Like event planning in the professional world, a lot of what you’ll do in our class is collaborative. You will have a chance to describe your individual efforts as well as reflect on your teammates’ efforts throughout the semester. Each student should contribute an equal amount to group projects. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade. Misrepresenting your efforts and allowing others to do the work while you take credit is considered academic fraud and could be reported to CLAS. It is your responsibility to be in touch if you have any questions or concerns about collaboration.

Professionalism
Professionalism is key in event planning. Students are expected to behave in a professional manner in the classroom and when representing the class in any way. This includes using proper email etiquette, arriving on time, being respectful and attentive, and more. Examples of unprofessional behavior include misusing in-class work time, showing up for client presentations in sweatpants, disrespectful communication with your client or teammates, arriving late or leaving class early without good cause, talking or using your electronics during class, etc. Participating in these unprofessional behaviors will negatively impact your grade.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Policies:

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.
Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2, k.11).

Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar’s web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student’s responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).
Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more info on Hawk Alert & the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.

Course Objectives:
Students in this course will gain a broad understanding of the event-panning field, especially through the lenses of law & ethics, writing & storytelling, and multiculturalism.

Law & Ethics Learning Goal
Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in real space and cyberspace, and demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and their historical development.

✓ Students will demonstrate an ability to anticipate and recognize ethical issues when they arise and to reason through them taking multiple perspectives and contexts into account.

✓ Students will demonstrate an ability to explain their ethical approaches and reasoning about a particular dilemma in terms that can be understood by a diverse group of people.

Writing and Storytelling Learning Goal
Understand that clear, concise, correct writing is at the heart of journalistic expression and that reporting and communicating it effectively requires a knowledge and achievement of the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.

✓ Students will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

Multiculturalism Learning Goal
To demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups (including communities defined by gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation) in a global society in relationship to communications.

- Students will demonstrate an ability to produce media that serve the needs and interests of diverse communities and reflect their voices and experiences.

- Students will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the cultures, histories, perspectives, and socio-economic and political situations of diverse groups.

- Students will demonstrate an ability to work with members of diverse groups to engage publicly over issues of community interest.

Schedule:

Week 1:
**Tuesday, August 22:** Course and classmate introductions. 
Event Planning Qualifications, Field Overview, and Job Outlook. 
**Thursday, August 24:** Primary assignment explanations and sign up. DUE: Day 1 Survey.

Week 2:
**Tuesday, August 29:** Class Event discussion and cohort meetings. 
**Thursday, August 31:** Discussion: Event Planning Timeline, Budgets, Sponsors, Date selection. DUE: Event Volunteering signup via ICON discussion board and BizBash signup via ICON announcement link. Failure to meet these deadlines could result in a lowered PPP grade.

Week 3:
**Tuesday, Sept. 5:** Discussion: Venues, Vendors, Catering, Contracts. DUE: Individual Event Plan client Identified. 
**Thursday, Sept. 7:** Discussion: Décor & Design, Marketing, & Social Media.

Week 4:
**Tuesday, Sept. 12:** FIELD TRIP! Meet in IMU Iowa Theater to speak with catering managers and tour IMU catering operations. 
**Thursday, Sept. 14:** Field Trip follow-up. Cohort meetings.

Week 5:
**Tuesday, Sept. 19:** DUE: Individual Event overview and venue selection. Individual Event Overview & Venue presentations

*Wednesday, Sept. 20: Event Planning Certificate Internship and Job Networking Event 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the AJB Rotunda. All event planning students are encouraged to attend!
**Thursday, Sept. 21:** Individual Event Overview & Venue presentations
Assignment reminder: Volunteering Experience.

Week 6:
**Tuesday, Sept. 26:** Discussion: Green Events. Prep for client visit.
**Thursday, Sept. 28:** Client visit. Cohort meetings.

Week 7:
**Tuesday, Oct. 3:** Guest speaker: Ken Aagaard, CBS Sports (virtual visit)
**Thursday, Oct. 5:** Discussion: Event Technology. Class Event updates. Cohort meetings.

Week 8:
**Monday, Oct. 9, @ 5 p.m. in the Brownell Room:** Pizza & discussion w/ Kevin Grothe & Certificate student Naomi Cochran about the International Festivals & Events Convention. RSVP required.
**Tuesday, Oct. 10:** Guest Speaker: Kevin Grothe, IFEA board member and VP of sponsorships for Memphis in May International Festival.
*3:30 p.m.: Event Planning Certificate Panel Discussion about Sponsorships in BCSB Room 101. Please plan to attend!*

Week 9:
**Tuesday, Oct. 17:** DUE: Marketing, social media, and event design assignment. Presentations.
**Thursday, Oct. 19:** Discussion: Crisis Management, Legal/Ethical Elements of event planning, SWOT Analyses, and post-event steps.
*Friday, Oct. 20: Certificate field trip to Cedar Rapids. Stay tuned for details and sign up!*

Week 11:
**Tuesday, Oct. 24:** Event Volunteering Experience presentations.
DUE: Event Volunteering Experience.
**Thursday, Oct. 26:** Event Volunteering Experience presentations.

Week 12:
**Tuesday, Oct. 31:** No class. Happy Halloween!
**Thursday, Nov. 2:** Client Visit. Discussion: Event Planning in Politics. Class event work time.

Week 13:
**Tuesday, Nov. 7:** Class event work time.
**Thursday, Nov. 9:** Class event work time. EVENT DAY!
Week 14:
**Tuesday, Nov. 14:** Class Event SWOT Analysis. DUE: Class Event Contribution.
**Thursday, Nov. 16:** Cohort meetings & individual conferences as desired.

THANKSGIVING BREAK: Be safe and enjoy!

Week 15:
**Tuesday, Nov. 28:** Guest Speaker: Angelica Vanatta, director of community outreach & special events for the Alzheimer’s Association East Central Iowa.
**Thursday, Nov. 30:** End of course game show. Final course evaluations.

Week 16:
**Tuesday, Dec. 5:** Individual Event Plan presentations.
DUE: Final Event Plan.
**Thursday, Dec. 7:** Individual Event Plan presentations. DUE: Final self evaluation

Week 17:
Finals Week. We will not meet. I will miss you!

{{PS: It’s important to be flexible! Please note that this is a tentative schedule. Unplanned opportunities and challenges may require changes.}}

**PPP Self Evaluations**
Due Oct. 12 and Dec. 7
15 points each

Your presence, participation, and professionalism are essential to your success in our classroom and essential to your success as an event planner.

At two points this semester, you will be asked to reflect on your performance in these three areas. Your reflection should be brief—less than one page—and include the number of points out of 15 you think you deserve for your efforts to date. Failure to include a specific number and justification will result in a lower grade.

**Class Project participation**
50 points

We will put course concepts into practice by planning and pulling off an actual event as a class. To do so will require several action steps outside of class. Students will sign up to take responsibility for an action step. You will submit the results/evidence of your work to the ICON dropbox along with an evaluation of your classmates’ contributions. Students will be responsible for meeting individual
deadlines on these action steps. Failure to complete your action step in a timely, thorough, or professional manner will result in a lower grade.

Event: The Moth-inspired live veterans’ storytelling with IowaWatch & AARP  
Date: Thursday, Nov. 9  
Location: Old Brick

Cohorts & Areas of Responsibility:
Leadership (4)
  Trello and task/time management  
  Research  
  Legal expertise  
  Client Communications  
  Budget & financial goal management  
  Crisis planning  
  SWOT analysis  
  Big & Little picture understanding
Fundraising & Budget (6)
  Sponsorship recruitment  
  Sponsorship recognition  
  Additional fundraising concept development  
  Income/Spending tracking & reporting
Venue & Catering (6)
  Space use plan  
  Venue contract expert  
  Event signage  
  Guest experience expert  
  Décor  
  Catering  
  Sustainability  
  Technology
Marketing (6)
  Invitations  
  Audience building  
  Social Media  
  Media liaison  
  Ticket sales
Activities (6)
  Storyteller recruitment and training  
  Script/event timeline  
  Day-of task assignments  
  VIP guest/participant management
Implementation (12)
  Last-minute errands  
  Set up  
  Event tasks
A successful event planner is innovative, on top of industry trends, and keeps an eye on the “competition.” To get you in the habit, I’m asking each student to sign up for BizBash Daily, a daily e-newsletter from a leading source of inspiration in the events industry. You’ll find a link at www.bizbash.com.

You each will be responsible for monitoring the newsletter for one week and will present one highlight to the class on your assigned day. A highlight can be something that you found inspiring, surprising, or even an example of something you didn’t like.

Your presentation should be brief (less than 5 minutes), but you should put together a PowerPoint presentation to help foster understanding and discussion. BizBash discussions will generally be at the start of our class period, so please plan to arrive a few minutes early on your day to set up. Please submit your presentation and a link to your BizBash article to the ICON dropbox.

**Alternate assignment: Many students bring with them rich events experience to the classroom. If you have planned an event and want to present on an event from your insider perspective, you may do so rather than focus on a BizBash article. No need to clear this in advance.

Speaker Preparation
10 points each

We are lucky to have some interesting, successful event planners join us for in-depth conversations about their work. To help our guests know that we are engaged, and to make the most out of their visits, you should conduct a little research on each person and their work in advance.

Based on that research, please submit to ICON a 3+-paragraph summary of the speaker’s bio and pertinent details about their occupation/place of work along with at least 3 questions you’d like to ask the speakers.

You should plan to ask one of your questions if there’s a lull or an appropriate time. There’s nothing I hate more than crickets when a speaker is willing to answer questions.

Speaker Preparations are due by the start of the class period before the speaker’s visit. Example: If the speaker is coming on a Thursday, the assignment is due by class time Tuesday of that week. Please see our weekly schedule for speaker dates and plan accordingly.

Event Volunteering Experience
75 Points
Step 1: Identify an event that can use you as a volunteer. To qualify, the event should draw at least 20 people. You can find events by searching community and university calendars. I will offer suggestions and opportunities in class and via ICON, but it is your responsibility to line up an event.

Step 2: Post to the ICON discussion board by August 31 the event you plan to volunteer with. If more than 4 other students have already posted about your event, please choose a different one.

Step 3: Be in touch with event organizers letting them know you would like to volunteer. Follow their instructions for how to carry out that goal. You should dedicate at least 5 hours before, during, or after the event. If your selected event doesn’t need volunteers or it doesn’t work out for any reason, be prepared to move quickly to a plan B. There are no extensions for switching events.

Step 4: As you are completing your volunteering duties, take notes on how the event is organized. How do event managers communicate with volunteers? How do guests learn the details they need to know? What choices do you see the event managers making—venue, vendors, décor, marketing, technology, activities, etc.? How are guests responding to the event? How are event managers handling the stresses of carrying out an event? What recommendations would you make for improving the event in the future?

Step 5: Take photos of the event and gather supplementary photos online.

Step 6: Organize your findings into a PowerPoint and submit your presentation file and additional notes via ICON. As time permits, all students will share their presentations with the class.

*Please note that you will be graded on the document you submit, not the presentation, so don’t leave anything out! Missing your presentation will result in an automatic 10% deduction on your assignment grade.*

Final Event Plan
150 points TOTAL

Throughout the semester we will talk about the event planning process and will plan an event as a group. This is your chance to call all the shots! Identify a client, communicate with the client about their event planning needs or interests, and produce a plan for an event that the client could choose to carry out. As time permits, students will present their plans to the class during our final week together.

Grading:
You will be graded based on incorporation of course content, professionalism, detail, evidence of research, potential for event plans to be implemented, as well as spelling, grammar, & organization.

Client & Event Parameters:
1) The event you plan should require in-depth thinking and research to allow you to gain meaningful experience. Choose an event of appropriate scope. A brownbag lunch for 10 people is too simple. A week-long international conference is too complicated.
2) This should be a new event, not a revamping of an existing event.

Details:
This project will build over the semester and will culminate with a final document and presentation.

Individual Event Plan
Event Overview & Venue Selection
(25 points)
Due Sept. 19

At the start of the semester you selected a project client and communicated with the client about his or her event needs. In this Word or PDF Document, please describe:

1) An introduction to your client.
2) Notes/bullet points from your client interview about event goals and preferences.
3) An initial vision for your event—who, what, where, when, why?
4) Venue details
   a. A description of where the event should take place and why.
   b. Venue photos and descriptions specific to your event.
   c. Information about venue cost and contract details.
   d. Two alternative sites in case your client prefers other options.
   e. If you’re planning an outdoor event, a back-up plan for inclement weather.
5) Information about at least two similar events from which you can draw inspiration.
   a. Tell us the basics—who, what, where, when why?
   b. How is this event relevant to yours?

Format: A detailed outline or bullet format is preferred for easy scanning. Please include visuals and links to build a rich, specific resource.

Individual Event Plan
Marketing, Design & Social Media
(25 points)
Due Oct. 17

You know the who, what, where, when, and why of your event, and now you need to get the word out about what you’re putting together. For this assignment, please describe:

1) Guests
   a. Who is the target audience for this event?
   b. How many people are you planning for and how did you arrive at that number?
2) Marketing
   a. How will you reach out to potential guests?
   b. Draft invitation/marketing content
   c. How will you collect RSVP information or anticipate guest numbers?
3) Social Media
   a. What role will social media play leading up to your event?
b. How will social media be incorporated in your event?
c. Post-event?
d. 3 or more pieces of example content including visuals

**Final Event Plan**
(100 Points)
Due Dec. 5

Your FINAL ICON submission will continue to build on your two previous submissions and should include two files:

1) A PowerPoint presentation that gives highlights of your plan. This would be a top-level presentation to a client to pique their interest in your more specific ideas. It should take no more than 5 minutes to present and should include links and rich visual content. You will present it to our class during our final week together. (15 points)

2) A thorough PDF document with links to at least 6 references, an embedded budget spreadsheet or Google Doc link, and links to Trello and Pinterest. Be sure your settings allow me to access your work, or, if you’d rather, invite me to join your boards privately. Please also include screenshots of your boards as a backup method. This report should be specific, in depth and a go-to document to actually make this event happen. (85 points)

The PDF should include:

6) Background information on your client.
7) Notes/bullet points from your client interview about event goals and preferences.
8) Information about competitors’ events or similar events.
9) Specific event plans including:
   a. Venue
      i. A description of where the event should take place and why.
         1. Contact information for venue representatives.
         2. Details for guests about whatever they’ll need to know.
      ii. Two alternative sites in case your client prefers other options.
      iii. If you’re planning an outdoor event, a back-up plan for inclement weather.
   b. Guests
      i. Who is the target audience for this event?
      ii. How many people are you planning for and how did you arrive at that number?
   c. Vendors (PINTEREST)
      i. Who will provide food, decorations, staffing, entertainment, etc.?
      ii. What specifics can you share with each vendor?
         1. Proposed menu.
         2. Decoration vision.
         3. Space set up.
         4. Staffing needs/tasks.
d. Activities (PINTEREST, TRELLO)
   i. What will happen at your event?
   ii. What is your proposed schedule of activities at the event?

e. Estimated costs (Embedded Google Doc or Excel spreadsheet)
   i. This should be as detailed and accurate as possible.
   ii. Include options for shaving costs whenever possible, to allow flexibility.

f. Marketing
   i. How will you reach out to potential guests?
   ii. How will you collect RSVP information or anticipate guest numbers?

g. Social Media
   i. What role will social media play leading up to your event?
   ii. How will social media be incorporated in your event?
   iii. Post-event?
   iv. Example content

h. Sustainability
   i. What will be the environmental impact of the event?
   ii. What ideas do you have to minimize that impact?

i. Crisis Management
   i. What crises can you anticipate?
   ii. How will you prepare to prevent and face these anticipated crises?

j. Plans for measuring the event’s success.

k. A timeline with task list for implementing the event. (TRELLO)

l. Any other details pertinent to your specific event.

External Components:

1) Budget Spreadsheet: Please use Excel or Google Sheets to create a detailed, itemized budget as discussed and demonstrated in class.

2) Trello: Please provide links to 1-2 Trello boards, depending on your preference.
   a. Detailed task list for planning the event.
   b. Detailed task list for the day of the event.
   c. To ensure that I can see your board, please set it to public, invite me to join the board, AND attach to your assignment submission a screen shot of your boards.

3) Pinterest: Please create a vision board to gather ideas and specific examples. If you do not wish to make your board public, you must invite me to join the board. Please also submit a screenshot of the board with your assignment.
   a. Venue
   b. Menu
   c. Décor
   d. Entertainment
   e. Activities
   f. Etc.

*Please note that you will be graded on the document(s) you submit, not the presentation, so don’t leave anything out! Missing your presentation day is grounds for an automatic 10% deduction on your TOTAL grade for this assignment.*
Day 1 Survey

Name and pronunciation:

Major:

Have you signed up to earn or are you planning to earn your Certificate in Event Planning?

Hometown:

Hobbies & special skills:

Is there anything else you’d like me to know about you?
Class Event Sign Up

We will divide into cohort groups to plan and implement our class event. Cohort duties and the number of students assigned to each group are described on page 9 of this syllabus. Please indicate below your cohort preferences by ranking them from 1 to 6, with 1 being the group you’d most like to join.

Leadership

Fundraising & Budget

Venue & Catering

Marketing

Activities

Implementation

Is there any reason why you absolutely CANNOT join any of these cohorts? (For example, if you are not available the evening of Nov. 9, the implementation cohort is not for you.)

Is there any reason why you would particularly love to do your top choice?

What special skills and areas of expertise can you bring to this project?