THE WESTON & SAMPSON WAY OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Module 1 · Week 1 — Video Script 1 of 3

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Created by AEC LEAD LLC, produced by Zweig Group
For the video production team · not learner-facing

“When Did This Project Begin?” — The Cold Open & How We Make Money

Target runtime	Learning objective	Interactive companion tie-in
~9:00	Locate the true start of a pursuit (before kickoff) and connect it to why Weston & Sampson’s employee-ownership model makes that timing — and its price — the learner’s business.	Companion Interactive, Screen 1 (The Waterfall) opens immediately after this video.

Script

Time	On-screen	Narration (VO)
0:00–0:15	SILENT COLD OPEN. Black screen. Five simple milestone icons fade in, scattered and out of order: Kickoff, Award, Proposal, Go/No-Go, Lead. No narration, ambient bed only. On-screen text, bottom third: “When did this project really begin?”	*(no narration — let the question sit)*
0:15–0:40	The five icons stay scattered; a soft highlight pulses on each in turn.	*“Take a second and actually look at that. Five moments in a project’s life. They’re out of order on purpose. Before I tell you anything: which one do you think comes first?”*
0:40–1:05	On-screen prompt, full frame: “Mark the earliest point — then come back.” Pointer to the companion tool icon (persistent throughout).	*“Open the companion and mark your answer. Really — pick one. I’ll wait.” [PAUSE POINT — learner marks the timeline in the companion, then resumes.]*
1:05–1:20	Icons remain scattered; screen dims slightly.	*“Alright. Most people pick kickoff. Some pick the proposal. Almost nobody picks what I’m about to show you.”*
1:20–2:10	The five icons animate into true chronological order, left to right: Lead → Go/No-Go → Proposal → Award → Kickoff. Each gets a one-	*“Lead. Someone hears about an opportunity before it’s official. Go/No-Go. The firm decides whether to chase it. Proposal. We*

	line label as it locks in.	*commit a price to paper. Award. The client picks us. And only then — kickoff. By the time you're sitting in that first meeting, four separate decisions already happened without you."*
2:10–2:35	Timeline stays on screen. Text overlay, bold: "The earlier you're involved, the more you can shape it."	*"Here's the idea to hold onto: the earlier you're involved, the more you can shape the project before it becomes a promise. Get in at 'Lead' and you help write the story."*
2:35–3:05	Split screen: "Shape it" (PM in a planning conversation) vs. "Understand and verify it" (PM reviewing a completed proposal).	*"Neither one makes you a lesser PM — both are real jobs, and WSE needs people who are good at each. But they ask different things of you. Shaping a pursuit means asking questions before anyone's committed to an answer. Verifying one means reading someone else's judgment and deciding whether you trust it. Today's about understanding the machine well enough to do either job on purpose."*
3:05–3:35	Transition graphic: "How does the firm actually make money?" WSE wordmark appears, ampersand in green.	*"So let's back up: how does Weston & Sampson actually make money? Every one of those pursuit decisions is a bet on what I'm about to show you."*
3:35–4:15	Motion graphic: "Sell the work → Do the work → Get paid," then a fourth node: "100% employee-owned."	*"We sell expertise delivered as hours, we do the work, we get paid. Weston & Sampson is 100% employee-owned — there's no outside shareholder taking the upside. That single fact changes what a 'good pursuit' means here."*
4:15–5:05	NEW graphic: two paths from the same starting bar — "Priced right" climbing into a rising line labeled "ESOP share value," "Priced to just stay busy" flattening into a line going nowhere.	*"Here's what that actually means in dollars, not just principle. When a pursuit gets priced to cover its real cost and still earn a fair margin, that margin doesn't disappear into some corporate account three states away — it flows into the firm's stock value, and once a year, into your ESOP account. Price it wrong — chase work at a discount just to keep busy — and there's nothing left to flow anywhere. Same hours worked. Different outcome for every owner in this company, including you."*
5:05–5:45	On-screen text: "You're an owner." Documentary-style staff footage.	*"If you work here, you're an owner — literally, through the ESOP. When a project runs well, the*

		margin comes back to the people who did the work. That's not a slogan on a break-room poster. It's a mechanism, and it runs on decisions made at the pursuit stage, long before anyone breaks ground."
5:45–6:30	NEW split-screen graphic: "Win it right" (healthy margin bar, ESOP value climbing) vs. "Win it just to win" (thin, near-flat margin bar).	*"So when someone says 'let's just get the work, we'll figure out the margin later' — that's the moment to pay attention. A win at the wrong price isn't a win. It's hours your firm owns and nobody's account grows from. The healthiest thing you can do as a future PM is care about the price as much as you care about getting picked."*
6:30–7:00	Timeline reappears, small, "Lead" highlighted. Text: "Next: what does an hour actually cost?"	*"A project's real beginning is a pursuit decision. Next up — we shrink the whole economic model into one number: a billing rate."*
7:00–7:35	NEW: rate graphic teaser — a single glowing number labeled "?/hr."	*"That one number carries everything we just talked about — wage, overhead, margin, and yes, your ESOP account — compressed into every hour anyone on your team bills. Once you can read it, you'll never look at a rate sheet the same way again."*
7:35–8:05	Companion icon pulses: "Try it yourself → The Waterfall."	*"Before you move on, open the companion and run the Waterfall yourself with real numbers. It only takes a couple of minutes, and it'll make the next video click twice as fast."*
8:05–8:35	NEW: brief hold on the WSE wordmark, ampersand pulsing green.	*"One number, one hour, the whole business model. That's next."*
8:35–9:00	WSE logo lockup with AEC LEAD / Zweig Group co-brand. Outro music.	*"See you in the next one." [END VIDEO 1]*