This is the first project of the course. It consisted of three lessons and covered the very basics of Excel.

**Lesson 1:**

A very basic pay calculator was built by multiplying “Hourly wage” with “Hours worked”. The employee name were randomly generated by the course instructor, I did not change anything. I copied the values as well just to make sure I am doing the task correctly. The minimum, maximum, average and total of the values were calculated using formulas and number type was covered – general numbers to currency and back. Main takeaways from the lesson were –

* Formulas in Excel start with “=”.
* You cannot quick enter formula from the drop-down suggestions’ menu using Enter, you have to double click on it.
* To fill a column with a value or formula just select the cells you want to fill keeping the intended formula or value in the first selected cell and press Ctrl + D.
* To fill row-wise use the same principle but the hotkey is now Ctrl + R.
* Row-wise filling will automatically update the cell references by shifting it right or left by one column. This can be termed as relative referencing.
* Excel supports different type of numbers and each has some specific formatting rules.
* You can change the number of digits after decimal place using the decimal shift option from the “Number” section under the “Home” tab.
* The formulas covered in this lesson – “=MIN”, “=MAX”, “=AVERAGE”, “=SUM”.

**Lesson 2:**

This lesson was mainly a revision of the previous one. Here we added a new column “Overtime hours” and based on it we calculated the “Overtime pay” using the formula - . The “Total pay” section is basically the summation of “Pay” and “Overtime pay”.

The main takeaway from this lesson was learning how to use the “=IF” function.

**Lesson 3:**

The final lesson of the project was focused on extending the salary calculations for all weeks of January. Although the course instructor manually input the hour values for the new weeks, I used the function “=RANDBETWEEN” to generate these values. The instructor said to consider 40 hours as a mean and so I used =RANDBETWEEN(30,50) for generating all the values. The main takeaways from this lesson were –

* Formulas in Excel are pretty easy and intuitive.
* Relative referencing is pretty cool but sometimes we need absolute referencing. For absolute referencing, just add ‘$’ symbol before the column name.
* Color the cells to make demarcating the sections easier.
* You can add numbers to date to shift it. Excel is smart.
* This is beyond the course, but the “=RAND” functions run every time there is any update in the sheet. It may feel a little disorienting at first.