Flex in a Week, Flex 4.5
Video 4.03: Implementing a Spark item renderer in List-based controls

In the last two exercises you implemented default and custom item renderers for the Spark DataGroup container.

In this video you will apply the same custom item renderer to two Spark List-based controls.

Keep in mind as you watch this video, that the item renderer was originally created for a container but is being applied to two controls.

This should illustrate to you the power of the Spark component architecture.

This is the application that you created in the last exercise.

You can see that the DataGroup container displays each of the data items using an item renderer that defines a gray background with a gray border.

Back in the code, I'm locating the DataGroup container and replacing the opening and closing tags with the List control.

When I save the file and run the application, you can see that the application doesn't look much different except that you can see the List control's border around all the data items.

Now, I will apply the same item renderer to the ComboBox control.

I am replacing the List tag with ComboBox tags.

When I save the file and then run the application, and click on the control, you can see all the data listed in the renderer.

However, when I click on one of the list items, then the ComboBox displays the words object Object because the control doesn't know which of the data properties to display.

I am adding a labelField property to the ComboBox instance with a value of lastName.

I am also adding the width property with a value of 125.

When I save the file, run the application again and select an employee from the list, you can see that the last name is appropriately displayed.

Notice that the employees are not centered in the list.

Back in Flash Builder, I'm opening the EmployeeItemRenderer.mxml file from the components package.

Within the opening BorderContainer tag, I am adding the bottom, left, and right properties and setting all of their values to 5.

I'm saving the file and running an application.

When I click the drop-down list, you can see that the employee data is now centered within the ComboBox control.

For your next step, work through the exercise titled "Creating item renderers for Spark List components".