

EXCEL YOUR FINANCIAL MIND

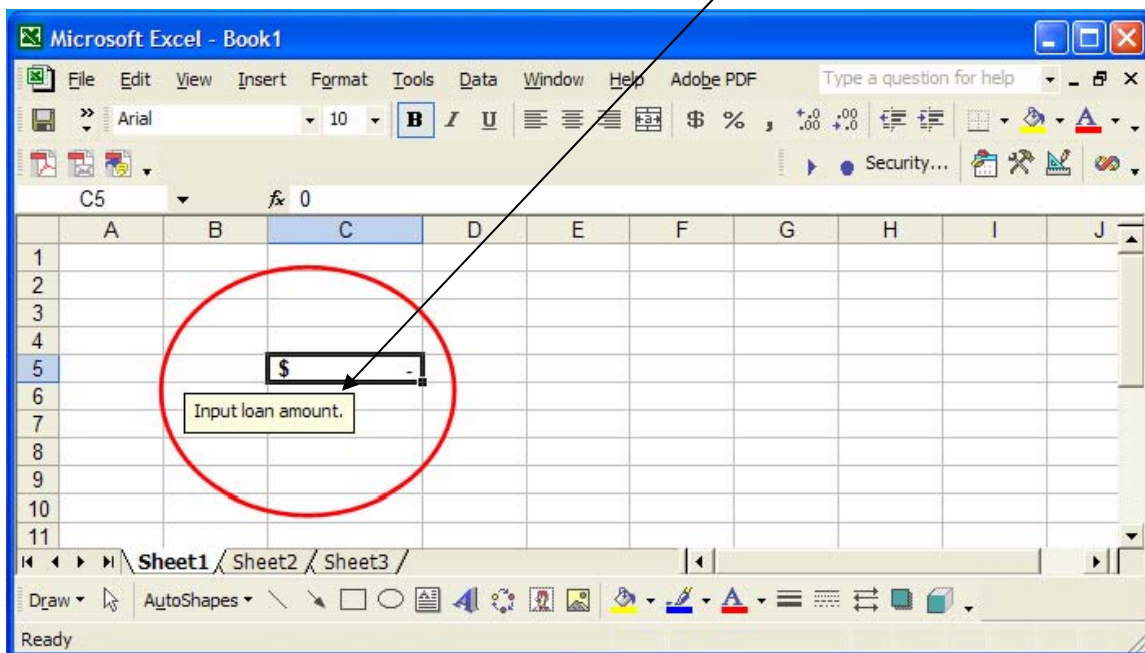
A bimonthly (how to) letter which covers some cool tools in Microsoft Excel
By Bob Walker @ Outside Bank Services

Today, I'm going to continue from the last letter covering **Data Validation**. Validation can be found under Data on the toolbar. You can use Validation to create the following:

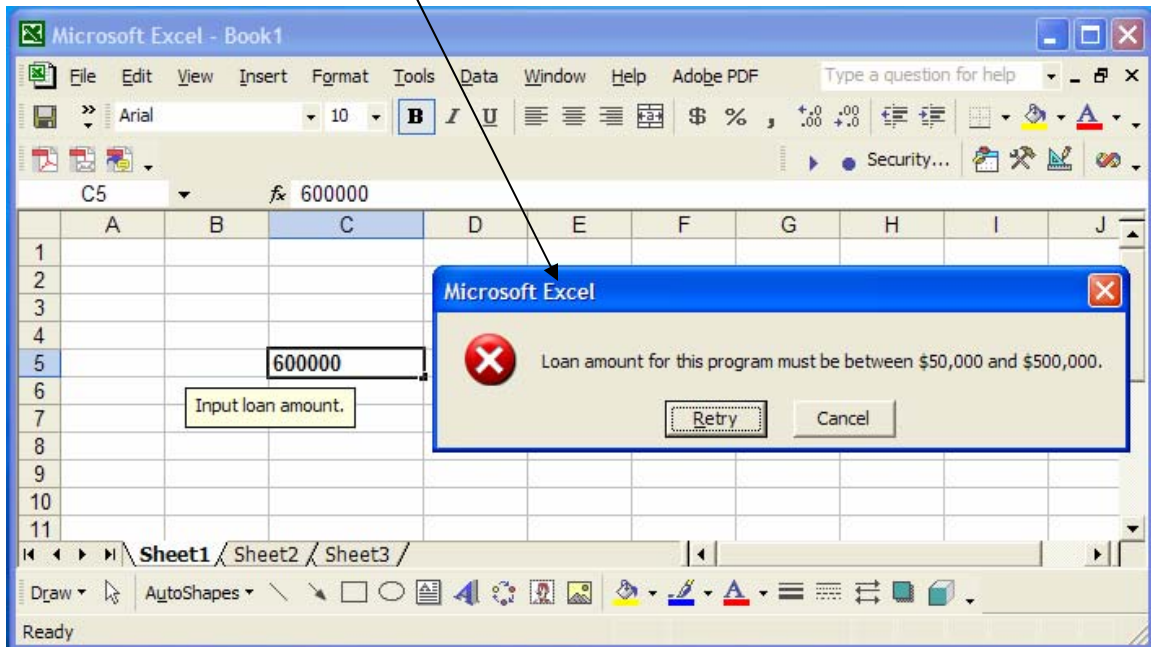
1. Combo box (we discussed last time)
2. Message box to inform the user about the cell that was just entered or clicked on,
3. Message box to inform the user that incorrect information was entered.

The Message Boxes will be my focus today. The Message Boxes have many good uses. One use could be to inform the user of a maximum loan limit or that the limits have just been exceeded.

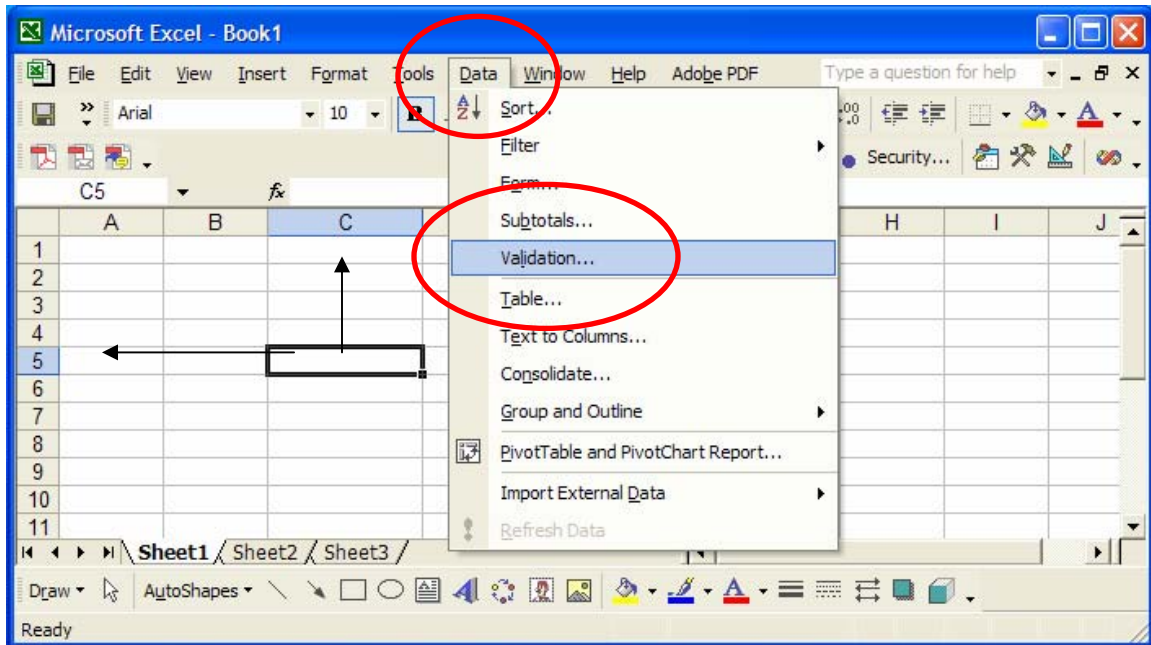
Message Box to inform the user about the cell that was just entered



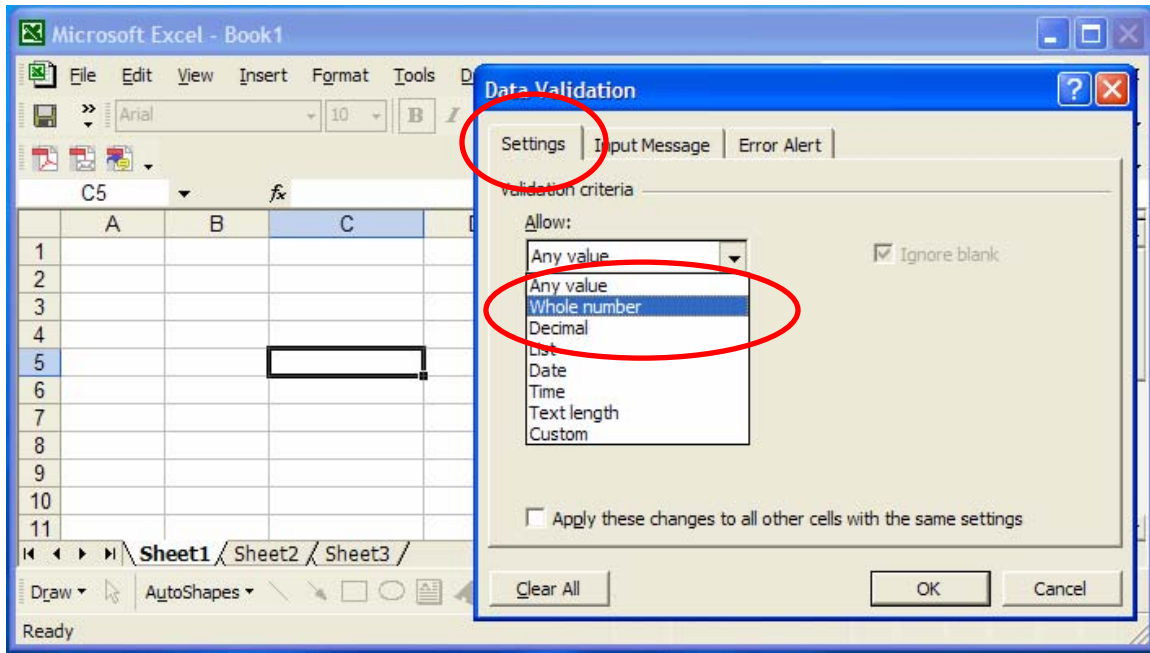
Message Box to inform the user that incorrect information was entered



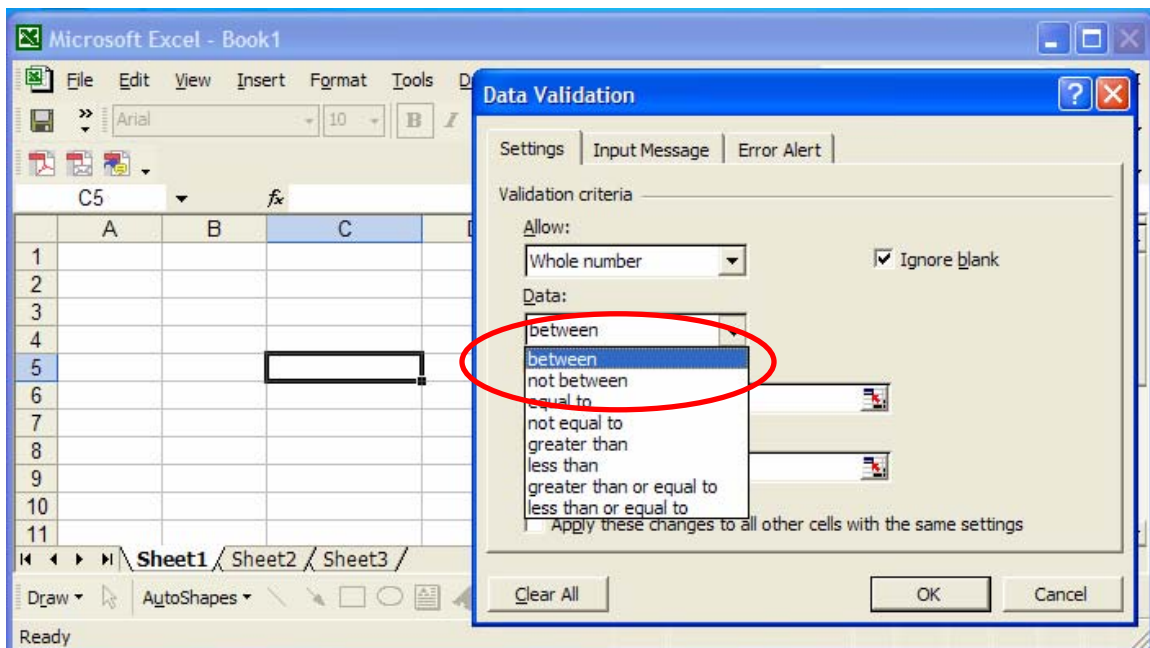
To create these Message Boxes, put your cursor on cell "C5". Then Click on Data on the Menu Bar. Slide down and click on Validation.



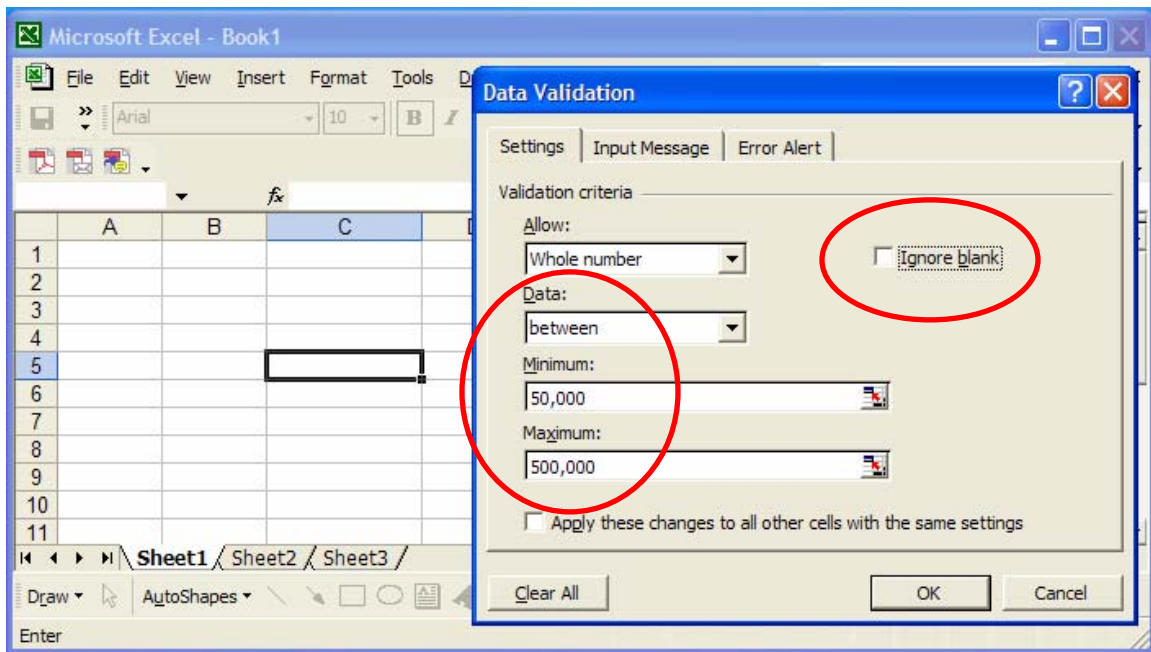
You will see a **Data Validation** menu. Be sure the tab "Settings" at the top of the menu is active. Under Validation criteria slide down and **click on Whole number**. (The reason you clicked on Whole number is, as a lender, you would round the loan amount to the nearest whole dollar).



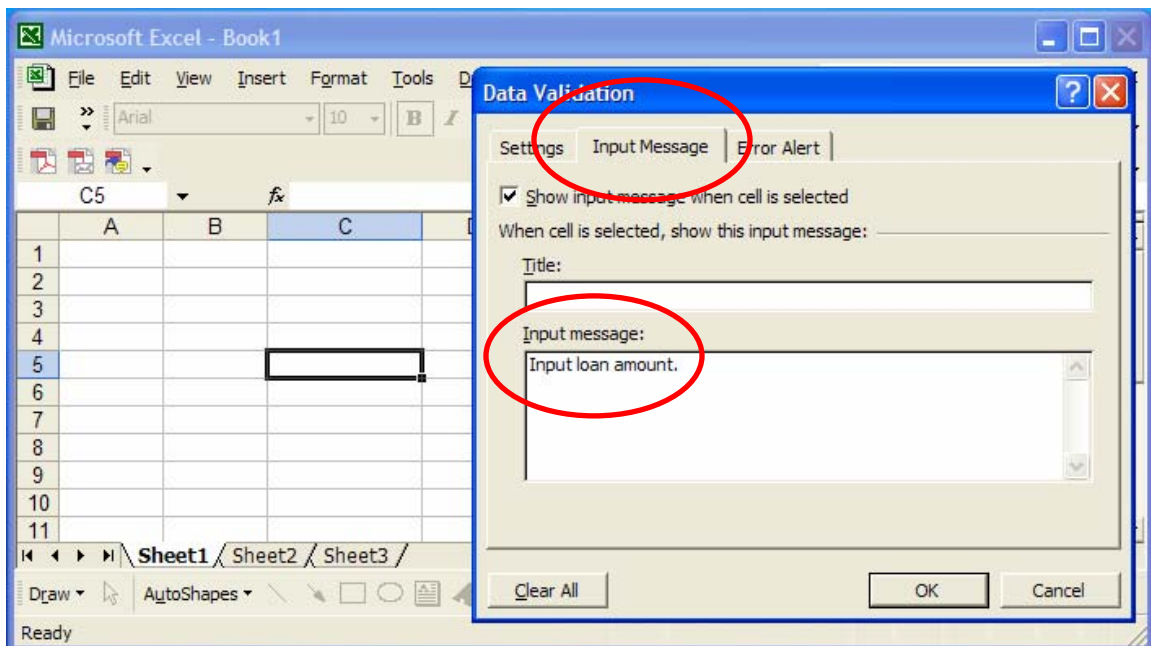
Once you **click on Whole number**, a new combo box will open asking you to define your data limits. Reviewing the list **between** is the option you want. **Press OK**.



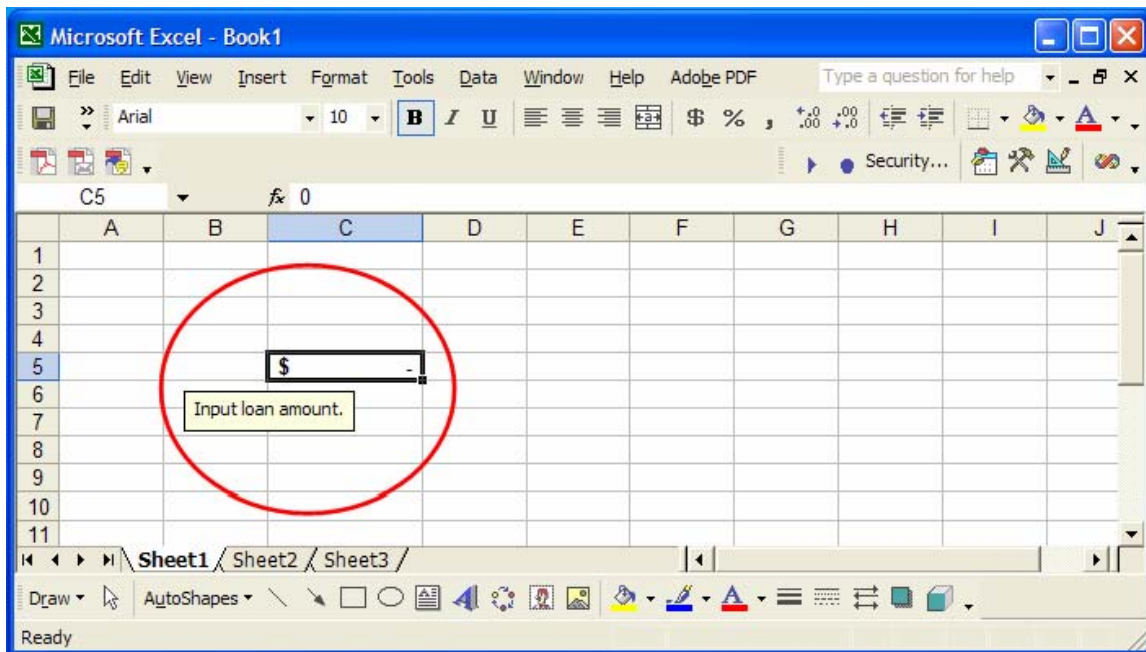
Using the "between" option, you have the ability to **define the floor of \$50,000 and the ceiling of \$500,000** for the loan amount. Knowing that the user must state the loan amount, **uncheck the Ignore blank** option.



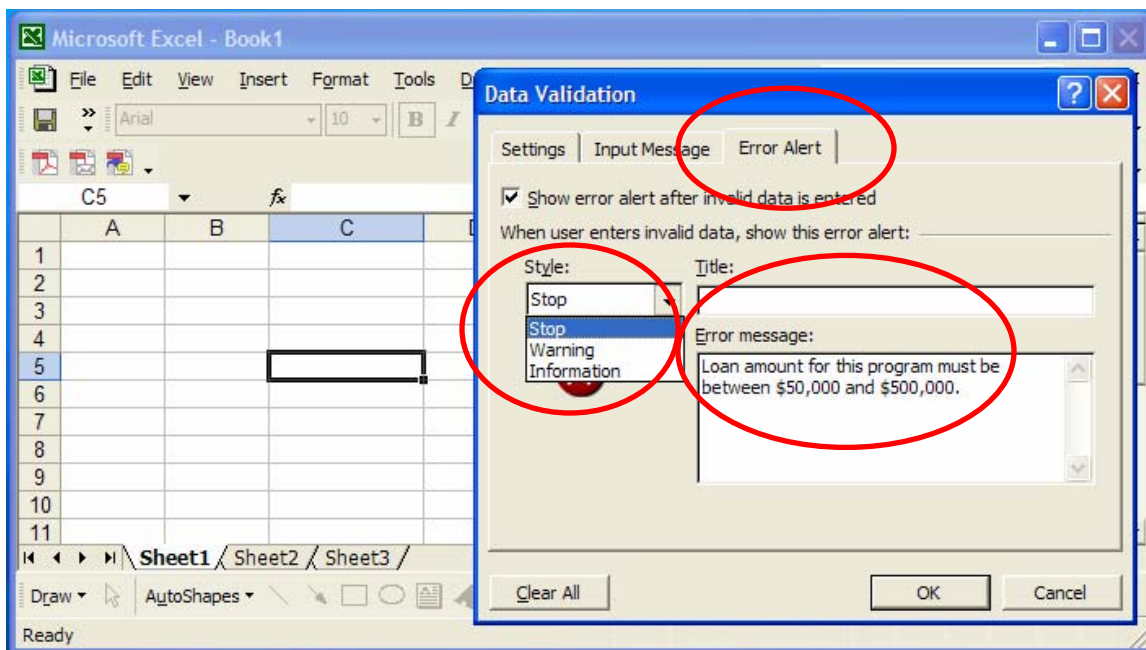
Next click on the **Input Message** tab and type the message "Input loan amount." Now, that message will pop up each time the user clicks on cell "C5".



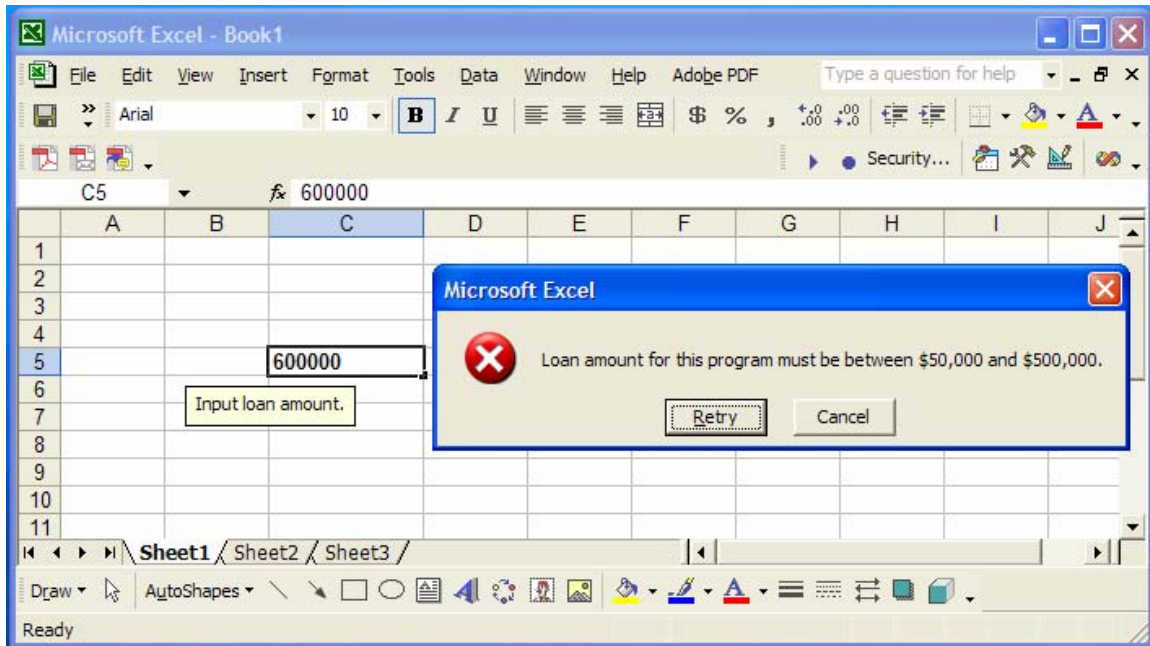
The result when clicking on "C5" is this message box stating "Input loan amount".



Next, click on the tab **Error Alert**. Then click on the drop down combo box under **Style**. Click on **Stop**. "Stop" will force the user to not advance on until the error is corrected. **Type an Error message** as below. Then click **OK**.



Because you clicked on "Stop" in the last example, notice the red X sign. As you try the other options under "Style", you will get the appropriate sign to match the type of warning.



You're done. You created the two **Message Boxes** used to communicate to the user for various reasons. After reviewing the Message Box today and the Combo Box last time, what do you think? **Pretty cool?** There are some other Validation criteria options which I encourage you to experiment with.

I hope this helps you out and you can use it in some of your spreadsheets. **Watch for my next (how to) letter in two weeks.** If you have not received any of these in the past and would like to see some of my previous tips for cool tools, drop me a line at bobw@outsidebankservices.com. I will be glad to send you some of my archived tips. Or, if you have any questions or ideas for future tips, let me know and I will try to cover the topic of your request.

If you need some help in creating spreadsheets, databases, or custom stand alone windows programs, I can help. It's my job. I have worked in the lending industry for over 20 years. I can and will do anything lenders don't want to do themselves. I'm also a California public notary. You can read about me on my website www.outsidebankservices.com.

You can call (760) 522-5878, or fax (866) 651-7350 or email bobw@outsidebankservices.com.

Thank you and I'm looking forward to some dialog. Bob Walker