

Brand You: TDY Finance

Back in the days when I was in the Navy, we had a term called TDY. And it stood for Temporary Duty. Let me make a strong suggestion. If you ever get an opportunity to do temporary duty in the finance department, do it. Temporary duty on a project that lasts two weeks or two months, a temporary assignment that's 18 months. The simple, practical reality is, for reasons that are mostly good, is that finance departments are the key to the workings of virtually any organization, from the mayor's office in New York City to the non-profit United Way, to the world of the company, small or big.

And the sooner and the more deep your relationships are in the finance department, the better over the long haul that you will be able to do in any assignment that you ever have again. There's nothing nefarious about this in the least. Finance departments are the yes/no people at critical times in every project, big or small. And if you know Mary and Mary knows you and if you know Dick and Dick knows you and you worked together on a project that was a hot project for the CEO—it only lasted three weeks—holy smokes! You have made the most significant, great leap forward in being able to use your own organization effectively that you will ever know or ever make.

So *any* time you can find *any* way to get directly engaged with finance: do it, do it, do it. Don't even take a deep breath. Say, "Yep, I'll be there tomorrow morning."