

# The Glass Front Door

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**Within today's complex and fast-paced project management landscape, professionals are constantly bombarded with tools and techniques designed to enhance their skills and streamline their workflows. Yet, it's often surprising how many project managers fail to effectively leverage these resources to navigate the challenges of both their professional and personal lives. Dr. Tammy Watchorn, author of "The Change Ninja Handbook" and "The Change Ninja Returns and this time it's personal," offers valuable insights into why this disconnect occurs and how project managers can bridge the gap.**

Tammy shares a compelling anecdote about a training participant who, despite acquiring valuable change management skills, struggles to apply them during a personal vacation. Highlighting a common phenomenon: the tendency to compartmentalize our professional and personal lives, leading to a missed opportunity to utilize transferable skills.

As the piece challenges our notion of what work-life balance really is. And how project managers achieve translating their professional expertise to their personal lives.

The concept of the "glass front door," represents a metaphorical barrier that separates work and home, preventing the application of valuable skills across different domains. By understanding this phenomenon and implementing strategies to overcome it, project managers can become more effective leaders, not only in their professional roles but also in their personal relationships.

Let's jump in...

**Dr Tammy Watchorn**

I was recently doing a review of a training programme on managing change, with an emphasis on neuroscience.

One of the participants was particularly honest and said:

"I haven't had time to use the training because I've been on holiday with my friends".

"How was it?" I asked.

"Terrible" she replied. "Nobody could agree on activities or places to eat and kept falling out."

"Oh dear" I responded "Quick question. Could the training you did before the holiday, have helped you manage the holiday issues? What do you think?"

I watched her expression and mood rise as she slowly realised that yes, it could have helped. A lot.



### ***We all respond and behave to things differently at home and at work***

You wake up early, you have a big day ahead presenting your business case to the board. There will be some difficult questions, but you have prepared well. The kids start to move as you switch on the kettle and the morning rush begins. The routine is slick. By understanding what makes each of them tick you have persuaded them all to do a particular task and so they all think they have the best job. No one complains and everything gets done without shouting. Mostly.

You lock the door and head to work, rehearsing your presentation as you go.

You arrive at your desk and your boss calls you in before saying "That thing you agreed to do for Sami yesterday. Why did you do that when you know I don't agree with him?" You feel a knot of panic in your stomach and your head about to explode on two fronts. One. Your boss is wrong but despite you

constantly telling them the benefits of the work they refuse to budge in their thinking. Two. You hate being told off, especially when you've done nothing wrong. You breathe and think about a logical response instead of overreacting. On the way back to your desk the Head of IT passes you and nods before stopping to explain why your current project is a waste of time. You start babbling about all the benefits of the solution, but they wander off without listening.

You grab coffee and head to the board meeting, refocusing your thoughts. It goes well. Very well. Because you had anticipated their questions and presented the answers at the start of your presentation rather than waiting for them to be asked. The rest of the meeting was just formality and ended early after consensus to proceed with your preferred solution.

### ***Forget the glass ceiling, It's nothing compared to the glass front door***

You celebrate with the team over tea and biscuits.

You arrive home, put your bags on the counter and accidentally knock over a glass of juice. "What did you do that for, it's gone all over my jumper?" someone hollers. You feel the heat rise in your face.

"Don't blame me. It shouldn't have been left there" you shout back. A short argument follows leaving you both feeling bad.

Over dinner you broach the subject of moving from the city to the country. You've done some research and decided it's the best thing for the family. But rather than excited questions about 'where to' there is outrage. You are bombarded with questions you hadn't anticipated and are surprised at the level of angst when clearly the benefits far outweigh the 'staying put' option. Dinner is ruined and your country-living dreams feel quashed.

As you are getting ready for bed you run through the day.

It started well because you have persuaded the 'stakeholders', in this case your family, to do the things that needed doing by tapping into the things that make them, as individuals, tick. But for some reason you haven't you used these skills on your boss or the Head of IT. Instead, you just keep explaining the benefits of the project because you think they are wrong and hope this will change their minds.

When your boss 'told you off' you stayed calm and responded rationally but when you were shouted at in the home you overreacted causing further upset.

You prepared a business case for the board full of answers to their anticipated worries but failed to do the same said business case approach when it came to selling the idea of moving to the country.

I call this the glass front door. Forget the glass ceiling. That is nothing in comparison.

### ***You have built your very own personal barrier***

The glass front door that keeps work and home separate. So separate that it can, without you noticing,

stop you using the skills, knowledge and experience you already have in different situations. Where home skills become redundant at work and training is left in the office.

Is it time to be a Ninja and smash that glass front door?

**Dr Tammy Watchorn. Author of 'The Change Ninja Handbook' and 'The Change Ninja Returns and this time it's personal' [www.change-ninja.com](http://www.change-ninja.com)**

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**Tammy Watchorn, The Original Change Ninja, is an experienced Change Practitioner, Thought-Leader and Best selling author of the Change Ninja book series and the 4 Day Ninja Challenge. She strives to help her growing community of Change and Transformation Leaders to learn new ways to approach change; putting people before process. Find out more about the work that she is doing [here](#).**