

Advise

Ways of de-emphasising this voice:

1. Reflect on occasions when it felt as if someone was really talking down to you. How did that make you feel? How did it make you behave and respond, both verbally and non-verbally, at the time and afterwards? Be alert for signs of similar responses on the part of other people towards you.
2. Give people permission to tell you, if they think you are simply stating the obvious or telling them things they already know.
3. Ask if the other person would like some advice *before* you offer it.
4. Identify the areas in which you have a particular depth, breadth or quality of experience and know-how. Take care not to *impose* your experience or expertise on others.
5. Listen carefully to your own use of prescriptive language: '*What you should do is...*'; '*If I were you I would...*' Check – paying close attention to whether their answer seems genuine or merely polite – whether the other person is finding your suggestions helpful or not. If it seems not, desist.
6. Re-call that 'suggestion' can create subtle forms of dependence between you and your team members and deliberately move 'to inquire' to break the pattern.