

## Challenge

Ways of de-emphasising this voice:

1. Catch yourself using the expression, '*I have to challenge that.*' The 'I' word makes the intervention sound more personal and makes it more likely to be heard as an attack. (The phrase can also be a verbal device that is used, selfishly, to secure the opportunity to speak rather than as a means to improve the quality of the dialogue as a whole.)
2. Ask yourself, and others, whether you are in the habit of over-dramatising your challenges, for example, sighing, rolling your eyes, drumming your fingers, looking pointedly at your watch.
3. Count how many times you interrupt or talk over others. Notice the adverse impact it has on others. Develop the sensitivity required to stop yourself.
4. Build up a vocabulary of which phrases represent – and are accepted as – useful Challenges and which are not. '*I don't agree*', for instance, is not a challenge; it is advocacy: the statement of your own position.
5. Invite someone else, perhaps a more reflective or emotionally detached person, to take the chair or play the facilitator's role.