

## Direct

Ways of de-emphasising this voice:

1. Reflect on the occasions when you have been directive with people and they have reacted badly. What words, phrases and tone do you tend to use? Ask yourself how *you* would expect to feel on the receiving end: appropriately corrected or unfairly punished? Adjust your language and tone, as necessary, to make your directives dignified, adult-to-adult and matter-of-fact.
2. When you encounter examples of non-compliance, ask the individuals concerned to assess the acceptability of what they have done. Give them the opportunity to spot the fault and say how it needs to be put right. (Being allowed to recover some 'face' will assist engagement). Cultivate others' capacity to self-monitor in the future rather than taking it upon yourself to 'keep people right.'
3. Ask yourself whether you ever *misuse* being direct as a way of simply expressing your own frustration or anger. Find other ways to deal with these emotions.
4. Don't keep going on and on about the same episode, since this can be utterly demoralising. Call attention to the problem. Spell out what is required. Check that's been understood. Draw a line under the episode and give all concerned the opportunity to move on.
5. Do not use your directing voice as a way of *publicly* demonstrating your power. In practice this will undermine your power by fostering resentment, disengagement and non-cooperation. Do not admonish individuals publicly. Do it privately.