

Inquire

Ways of strengthening this voice:

1. The distinctive function of the Inquire voice is quite simply to seek access to what is in another person's mind. You may be under-using this voice, because you are over-relying on your own capacity for sense-making. Reflect on how this may be limiting both the quality of the judgements that you are able to make and others' willingness to accept your contributions.
2. Make your inquiry more directly person to person. Look the other in the eye and hold eye contact both while you make your inquiry and throughout their response. Do remember to blink though!
3. Don't keep your questions to yourself, hidden inside your head. Because inquiry is the primary voice for enabling the meeting of minds, it needs to be done openly. Otherwise it descends into mind-reading, guesswork, speculation, projection and other forms of unnecessary misunderstanding.
4. You may make little, or only moderate, use of Inquiry because you are in a hurry to use the product of your questioning for some other purpose. Your Inquire may be serving as little more than a prelude to some other voice. This is often a difficulty for achievement-driven, action-oriented or solution-focused people. When inquiring, slow down, and listen carefully. Give this voice the time it needs to work.
5. Others will only reveal what they are thinking if they believe it is safe to do so. Encourage people to be open by showing your own open-mindedness. Ask questions which are clear and pertinent; listen actively, patiently, visibly and non-judgementally to what comes back.
6. Stay in inquiry mode for longer than you ordinarily would. Avoid the temptation to shift quickly to one of the more assertive voices.