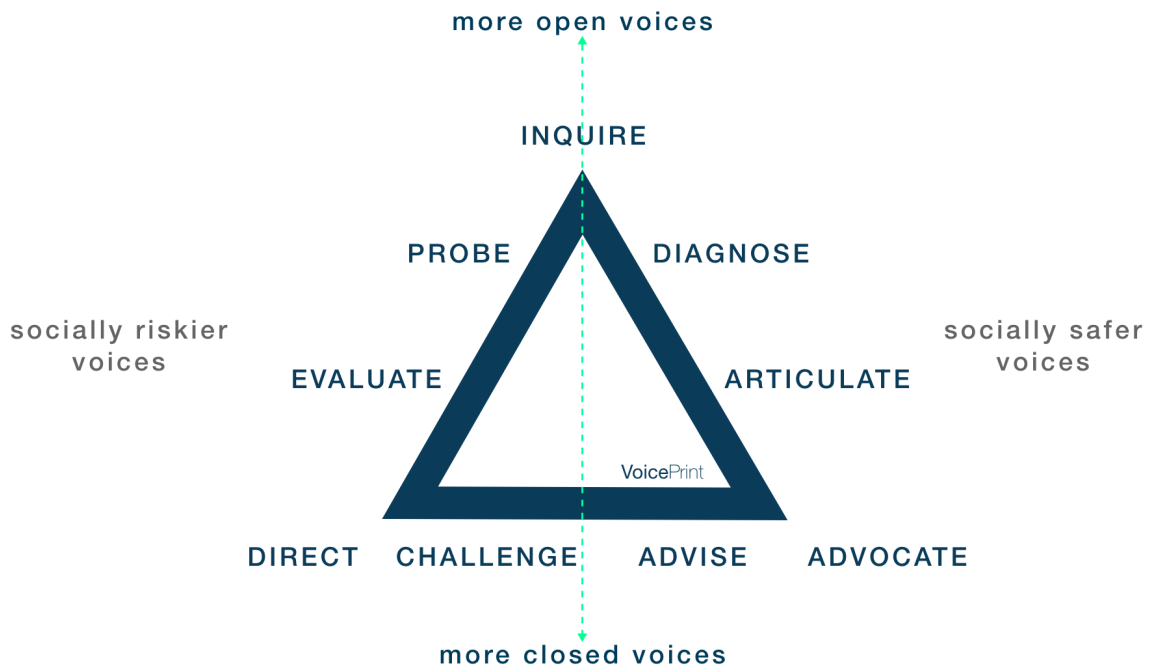


Map 4: Safer and riskier voices



Some voices carry more interpersonal or social risk than others. Specifically, the voices to the left of the vertical line in this diagram are generally riskier in that respect than the voices to the right. Unsurprisingly, the Controlling voices (Challenge, Direct and Evaluate) all fall into the riskier category. But note that Probe, with its associated risk of coming across as intrusion, is also relatively risky, so inter-personal risk is not simply a matter of being relatively closed or relatively open.

This observation is not simply evident from our own experience but is derived from research into the relative use made of each of the nine voices (as reported through the VoicePrint self-perception questionnaire). Ranking revealed that Inquire is reported to be the most commonly used voice and Direct the least. Indexing revealed that Inquire, Diagnose, Articulate, Advocate and Advise are all used somewhat more often, while Challenge, Evaluate, Probe and Direct tend to be used rather less often. Note that these are generalisations based on overall tendencies observed in the whole

population of VoicePrint data. The specific patterns of individual profiles can be very different and vary enormously.

Note also that while this generalisation may be valid for people in general, there is also evidence that there are subtle differences between cultures, so that a specific voice may be particularly welcome or unwelcome in a specific culture. For example, there is clear evidence that British culture is (or at least has been) significantly less comfortable with the use of the Direct voice than the Dutch or German cultures. The issue of which voices are more or less expected and acceptable is an important variable among different organisational, as well as different national, cultures. This remains an area of continuing interest in VoicePrint research.