

Sources for “Stop PowerPoint Spam. Deliver Better Presentations.”

## “The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint” from the book, *Beautiful Evidence*

Edward Tufte

PowerPoint is entirely presenter-oriented, and not *content-oriented*, not *audience-oriented*... the fans of PowerPoint are presenters, rarely audience members.

For the naive, bullet lists may create the appearance of hard-headed organized thought. But in the reality of day-to-day practice, the PP cognitive style is faux-analytical. A study in the Harvard Business Review found generic, superficial, simplistic thinking in the bullet lists widely used in business planning and corporate strategy. What the authors are saying here, in the Review's earnestly diplomatic language, is that **bullet outlines can make us stupid**.

In a strange reversal, nearly all PowerPoint slides that accompany talks have much lower rates of information transmission than the talk itself. Too often the images are content-free clip art, the statistical graphics don't show data, and the text is grossly impoverished.

Imagine a widely used and expensive prescription drug that claimed to make us beautiful but didn't. Instead the drug had frequent, serious side effects: making us stupid, degrading the quality and credibility of our communication, turning us into bores, wasting our colleagues' time. These side effects, and the resulting unsatisfactory cost/benefit ratio, would rightly lead to a worldwide product recall.

## How to avoid death By PowerPoint, TEDx Stockholm, video

David JP Phillips

One of the most leading neurologists, John Medina, puts it like this: “If companies would have as little respect for business as they have for presentations the majority would go bankrupt.”

If you delivered a presentation with something like *that* behind you, 90% of what you said was gone in 30 seconds.

## TED's secret to great public speaking, TED Studio, video

Chris Anderson

Make your idea worth sharing. By that I mean, ask yourself the question: "Who does this idea benefit?" And I need you to be honest with the answer. If the idea only serves you or your organization, then, I'm sorry to say, it's probably not worth sharing. The audience will see right through you.

But if you believe that the idea has the potential to brighten up someone else's day or change someone else's perspective for the better or inspire someone to do something differently, then you have the core ingredient to a truly great talk, one that can be a gift to them and to all of us.