

The PowerPoint Toxicity Test

Circle the quality you would like from your organization....	...and compare it to the predictable behavior that the prevailing PowerPoint paradigm actually produces.* Is PowerPoint toxic to your organizational culture?
clarity	"impedes understanding" "difficult to understand context and evaluate relationships"
transparency	"disguises tone of voice and point of view" "disguises the fragile foundations of a proposal" "radical over-simplifier"
trust integrity	"intellectually suspect" "leads us to believe the information is all there" "messes up data with...systematic intensity"
obsessed with helping customers focused on others	"entirely presenter-oriented, and not content-oriented, not audience-oriented" "imposes itself on the audience and ... seeks to set up a dominance relationship between speaker and audience" "aggressive" "artificially marches the audience to a predetermined conclusion" "over-managed" "alienates"
listens carefully	"chills discussion" "we present to each other instead of discussing" "discourages questioning"
team orientation	"gives you the outcome, but removes the process"
minimal hierarchy	"deeply hierarchical" "obsessive compulsive organizational structure"
diversity originality	"squeezes out...the rhetorician, the storyteller, the poet" "intolerant of subtlety and nuance"
passionate vision	"monotonous" "audience is respectfully still"
discipline	"inability to remain focused on something long enough to assess it effectively" "does not bring intellectual discipline to planning"
learning orientation	"makes us stupid" turns "expensive, expert decision-makers into novice decision-makers"
self-confident	reliance on slides as "a teleprompter" use of the tool as a "cover-your-ass record"
judged by results	"You are judged by PowerPoint – you insist on being judged by it."

*Quotes from: "Absolute PowerPoint", *The New Yorker*, May 2001; "Ban It Now", *Fortune*, August 2001; "More Power Than Point," *Inc.*, July 2003; *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint* by Edward Tufte, 2003; *Really Bad PowerPoint* by Seth Godin.