

Consuming Presentations

OUR evidence concerning PP's performance is relevant only to serious presentations, where the audience needs (1) to understand something, (2) to assess the credibility of the presenter. For non-serious pitches and meetings, the PP cognitive style may not matter all that much. Rather than providing information, *PowerPoint allows speakers to pretend that they are giving a real talk, and audiences to pretend that they are listening.* This prankish conspiracy against evidence and thought should provoke the question, *Why are we having this meeting?*

Consumers of presentations might well be skeptical of speakers who rely on PowerPoint's cognitive style. It is possible that these speakers are not evidence-oriented, and are serving up some PP Phluff to mask their lousy content, just as this massive tendentious pedestal in Budapest once served up Stalin-cult propaganda to orderly followers feigning attention.

Military parade, Stalin Square, Budapest, April 4, 1956. Photograph by AP/Wide World Photos.

