

# How Professor Dumbledore, Harry Potter and Kung Fu Panda can make you think about your Coaching

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I posted a blog around a few months ago the impact of cartoons such as Inside Out ([Are you an inside out coach? How the disney pixar movie can influence your coaching](#)) showing how media of all types can highlight areas of influence we can consider to improve and develop our coaching.

As much as I would love to claim this, but I will give credit elsewhere - a colleague at the University of Central Lancashire, John Stoszkowski took this concept with his undergraduate coaching students and asked them to identify 'coaches' in the areas of literature and films, and how we can use their techniques and ideas to reinforce our own coaching and philosophies...

One of the first that was shared with me was Harry Potter's mentor at Hogwarts, Professor Dumbledore. Dumbledore can be associated with many levels of coaching throughout the series of books... identifying talent, mentoring a range of pupils and abilities, encouraging self-discovery, setting challenges and tasks, encouraging practice and dealing with failure and setbacks.

I now use Kung Fu Panda as a great example of coaching behaviours of both coaches and our athletes. Po (the Kung Fu Panda) has the dreams to be a Kung Fu master and the Dragon Warrior. After being chosen by accident, Master Shifu presents challenges to remove Po from the training but is actually making him become a great warrior and signs of coaching, mentoring and learning are scattered throughout the film, most notably using Po's love of food as positive reinforcement to the challenges and development ahead of him. The relationships between the other Kung Fu warriors also show the complicated relationships within teams and with coaches and mentors.

I watch all movies, and in particular cartoons and fantasies, as an explanation and representation of coaching behaviours, mentoring and development.

From the Lego Movie (creativity as its best), through Cars (where Doc guides Lightning McQueen on a journey of discovery) to Monster University (where Mike and Sully use their combined skills to achieve their goals), coaching is shown on so many levels.

And don't get me started about the Star Wars saga.....!!

**What are your go-to books and movies to represent what we do as coaches, in coaching and beyond?**

As always, I look forward to hearing your thoughts!!

Jon

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