

Getting Started Guide



Direct link to [EthanGPT](#)

(read the original announcement [here](#))

The Big Idea

EthanGPT is more than just a chatbot. It's a thinking partner, trained on decades of experience coaching top performers in tech — especially at Amazon. And its available 24/7, 365.

It helps you:

- Think sharper
- Navigate the grey
- Push past blockers
- Prepare with precision
- Act with clarity

Bottom line:

Don't treat EthanGPT like Google. Treat it like Ethan sitting across from you. Poke it. Provoke it. Make it sweat. That's where the clarity comes.

You're not getting generic advice. You're getting Ethan's thinking — someone who got promoted multiple times, led global orgs, and coached hundreds of Amazonians.

The Golden Rule: Garbage In = Garbage Out

EthanGPT is only as good as what you give it. You wouldn't walk into a coaching session with Ethan Evans and say, "I'm stuck. Fix me."

You'd bring:

- Specific challenges
- Background context
- Examples
- Drafts
- Documentation

Same here. The more you tell it, the more it can help. Be honest, detailed, and situational.

How to Get the Most From It

Bring a Real Challenge

Start with something you're actually facing:

- A blocker
- A decision
- A promo doc
- A performance issue
- A tough stakeholder

Drop it all in. Be specific. Don't sanitize it. "I'm an L6 PM, trying to get promoted this cycle. My skip hasn't mentioned me once in any staff meetings. My manager gives vague feedback. I feel stuck and unsure if I should escalate." That's gold. That's coachable.

Attach Docs and Context

Yes, really. Paste your:

- Promo doc
- Meeting notes
- Skip-level update draft
- Feedback from peers or manager
- Org chart

EthanGPT thrives when it can see what you're working with. It can review, analyze, rewrite, question, and challenge your thinking.

Treat It Like a Real Coach

Ask it the same way you'd ask a human:

- "What would Ethan push me on here?"
- "What's the unspoken problem?"
- "Am I blaming instead of owning?"
- "What would make this sharper?"

It's not just here to affirm. It's here to challenge, provoke, and clarify — just like real coaching. EthanGPT will tell you what you *need* to hear — not just what you *want* to.

Talk the Way You Think

Don't worry about being formal.

Type like you talk. Think out loud. Ramble. Be real. The more raw and natural your input, the more relevant and sharp the response.

Use Cases (It's More Than Coaching)

EthanGPT isn't just for feedback sessions or "big moments." Use it daily as your thinking partner and productivity edge.

- Coaching through difficult decisions

- Drafting content (emails, updates, docs) in Ethan's tone
- Analyzing documents (promo docs, feedback summaries, org updates) the way Ethan would
- Prepping for high-stakes meetings
- Objection handling, risk taking and influence strategy
- Reframing tough convos before you have them

Use It Like a Loop, Not a One-Off

This isn't a once-a-week tool.

It's your daily sparring partner. Make it a habit.

Don't Just Ask Once — Wrestle With It

The biggest mistake? Typing one question, reading one answer, and moving on.

That's not how coaching works. That's not how clarity happens. To get real value from EthanGPT, you need to wrangle with it. Push. Iterate. Go back and forth. That's where the breakthroughs come from. Think of it like working a muscle. The deeper the reps, the stronger the outcome.

Try These Follow-Up Prompts:

Once you get an initial answer, ask:

- "Go deeper on that point."
- "What would Ethan challenge me on here?"
- "What assumptions am I making?"
- "List out the risks and how I could mitigate them."
- "Where am I playing it safe?"
- "What would make this answer 10x sharper?"
- "Can you make this more strategic and less tactical?"
- "How would this land with a VP?"
- "Push me to take ownership here."
- "What's the part I'm not saying out loud?"

Each follow-up gets you closer to something usable — not just interesting.

Coaching Is a Conversation, Not a One-Liner

Real coaching happens in loops. The first answer is rarely the best one — just like in real life, the gold is in the second, third, fourth layer of the conversation.

You might get something good off the bat.

But you'll get something *great* if you:

- Push back
- Ask why
- Ask what's missing

- Ask how to make it land at your level

Ask Like You'd Talk

Instead of: "How do I manage up?" Try: "I'm getting skipped in meetings. My VP is polite but disengaged. My skip-level has no idea what I do. My manager's advice isn't helpful. What would Ethan tell me to do next?"

And then follow up with:

"Write the message I should send."

"How do I make this land politically?"

"What's the power move version of this?"

What's in it for You?

"I want to get promoted — but I'm not sure what's missing."

EthanGPT helps you clarify your impact, sharpen your self-assessment, and translate your work into the language of advancement.

Ask it:

- "Here's my promo doc. Where am I being too vague?"
- "Does this show ownership or just effort?"
- "How do I frame my work in terms of business outcomes?"

"I'm writing something important and I want it to land."

Whether it's a stakeholder update, strategy doc, or 1-pager for leadership, EthanGPT helps you think and write with clarity, confidence, and precision.

Ask it:

- "Rewrite this update to be more direct and executive-friendly."
- "What would make this opener land stronger?"
- "What risks would a senior stakeholder read between the lines?"

"My manager (or skip) isn't giving clear feedback."

EthanGPT helps you self-diagnose, reframe ambiguity, and decide whether to adapt, confront, or escalate.

Ask it:

- "My manager keeps saying 'you're doing fine.' What does that actually mean?"
- "How do I ask for actionable feedback without sounding defensive?"
- "What questions would Ethan recommend I ask in my next 1:1?"

"I'm managing others and want to be more effective."

Use EthanGPT as your silent advisor for team management, feedback convos, and performance issues.

Ask it:

- “One of my team members is great technically but demotivated — what’s my move?”
- “How do I give clear feedback without killing morale?”
- “I need to write a performance review that’s direct but fair — help?”

“I’m in a politically sensitive situation and don’t want to screw it up.”

EthanGPT understands influence, power dynamics, and cross-functional tension. It helps you navigate complexity with strategic clarity.

Ask it:

- “My stakeholder keeps going around me — how do I address it?”
- “Should I escalate this? If so, what’s the smartest way?”
- “How do I protect my team without sounding like I’m playing politics?”

“I want to think more like a strategic operator — not just an executor.”

EthanGPT challenges your thinking, reframes your approach, and helps you operate at a higher altitude.

Ask it:

- “What’s the strategic version of this update?”
- “How would Ethan frame this to a COO?”
- “Where am I still too reactive instead of proactive?”

“I’m overwhelmed — I need to reset, refocus, and figure out what matters most.”

EthanGPT cuts through the noise and helps you prioritize, reframe, and get clear on where to focus next.

Ask it:

- “What would Ethan say if I told him I’m overwhelmed and spread thin?”
- “What should I stop doing this week?”
- “How do I get back to the work that actually moves the needle?”

“I’m prepping for something high-stakes and want to show up sharp.”

From big meetings to exec reviews, EthanGPT helps you prepare, rehearse, and raise your game.

Ask it:

- “I have a VP review next week. What’s the unspoken risk here?”
- “Give me 3 sharp ways to open this update.”
- “What would Ethan want to see in this room?”

FAQs

1. What's different between this and standard ChatGPT?

EthanGPT isn't generic. It's trained on over 450,000 words of Ethan Evans' actual coaching, content, and frameworks. It gives you sharp, direct, and situational guidance — the kind you'd get if you were working with Ethan 1:1. Standard ChatGPT gives you *average internet wisdom*. EthanGPT gives you applied executive judgment — based on real-world experience from someone who coached hundreds of top performers at Amazon and beyond.

2. Is this just for people who want to get promoted?

No — but it's great for that.

It's also for anyone who wants to:

- Think more strategically
- Communicate with clarity
- Navigate org politics
- Handle tough feedback
- Influence without authority
- Lead through ambiguity

Whether you're an IC, manager, or exec — EthanGPT helps you sharpen how you think and act.

3. How much context should I give it?

As much as possible.

This works best when you paste in your:

- Promo doc draft
- Feedback
- Meeting notes
- Conflict situation
- Update you're about to send

More input = more personalized advice. Garbage in = garbage out.

4. Can I trust it to challenge me — not just agree?

Yes. EthanGPT is built to push, not please. It will ask hard questions. It won't sugarcoat. If you want truth over comfort, this is the tool. That's what makes it different from most AI "helpers" — it's not polite, it's *useful*.

5. Is the advice perfect? What if it's wrong?

No — and that's the point. EthanGPT gives you a sharp, experience-based perspective, not a guaranteed answer. It's meant to push your thinking, not replace it. Sometimes it'll miss.

Sometimes it'll push too hard. That's coaching. Your job is to challenge it back, reflect, and decide what to take forward. This isn't a script — it's a sparring partner.

6. Is this confidential? Does anyone see what I type?

No one on Ethan's team sees your chats. Everything you type stays within the GPT interface — it's private to your session unless you choose to share it. That said, don't put in sensitive company IP or private employee data. Treat it like you would a journal with a thinking coach — real, but responsible.

Help us build more with AI

Call to action for AI builders — This is V1. We will build more with AI to help high performers make no BS career breakthroughs. If you have ideas (or have already built something) and want to collaborate, write in the comments and/or reach out to us ([Ethan](#) and [Jason](#)).

FYI 1 — A key bar raiser to thank is [Alan O'Beirne](#) (SVP of Global AI Innovation Lead at Marsh McLennan; former Amazon). He proactively aggregated Ethan's public content, built the GPT, and said *"Here you go."* What started as a solo project turned into a collaboration where we added more content (and continue to add more), fine tuned prompts, incorporated beta user feedback, and decided the "rings of expansion" plan to get the GPT in the hands of everyone.

FY 2 — Be sure to see the other document tab titled "Before & After Prompts."

Before & After Prompts

Before & After prompt examples

Scenario 1: Handling Defensiveness in Executive Meetings

- **Original Prompt** "How do I avoid coming off as defensive when challenged by executives (e.g. SVPs) in high-stake meetings?" **Original Score** 6.5 / 10
- **Alan Prompt** "How do I avoid coming off defensive when challenged by executives (SVPs) in high-stakes meetings? For example, last week I presented on our operations report and cloud cost savings at Netflix. We missed two goals. An SVP probed hard, but the issue was a dependency. I tried to explain but came off as defensive. **Improved Score** 9.5 / 10
- **Why It's Better** Provides real, recent example with emotional and reputational impact. Clarifies dynamics of the meeting (SVP challenge, public setting). Surfaces the tension between ownership and fairness (dependency vs. blame)
- **Ethan coaching questions the user should provide** What did you hope the SVP would say or notice about you in that meeting? Have you had similar public moments before? was this a pattern or a first? What would 'handling it perfectly' have looked like in your eyes? What exactly did you say when the SVP pushed you, can you recall your actual words or phrasing? Did you know this dependency was at risk before the MBR? If so, why didn't you escalate it, and if not, why wasn't that signal visible?

Scenario 2: Signaling Strategic Thinking in MBRs/QBRs

- **Original Prompt** "I am a Senior Manager in FAANG and I want to make an impression during the few meetings I have with SVPs and VPs (during MBRs or QBRs). In these meetings, how do I show and communicate that I am thinking strategically on the wider company level (vs just my own org)?" **Original Score** 8 / 10
- **Alan Prompt** "I'm a Senior Manager at FAANG and want to make a strong impression in upcoming QBRs/MBRs with VPs/SVPs. One idea: I want to probe AI adoption org-wide and highlight my team's wins as a model. Also give me hard-hitting, reusable questions to elevate any program we review." **Improved Score** 9.5 / 10
- **Why It's Better** Provides specific, strategic initiative (AI in dev processes). Shows intent to drive cross-org value, not just individual recognition. Requests tools for repeatable impact (question set), not just theory
- **Ethan coaching questions the user should provide** What executive-level company goals does your AI initiative map to—can you name them? How much visibility does your work currently have with peer orgs or exec sponsors? If you had to pitch this as a scalable platform or mechanism, how would you describe it in one sentence? What's the most strategic question you've ever asked in an exec forum—and what reaction did it get? Who is the most senior person who's personally vouched for your thinking as 'strategic'—what did they say and when? When you pitch your team's AI work as a model, what exact benefits are you pointing to—quantifiable impact, or 'this looks cool'?

Scenario 3: Recovering After Stumbling in Exec Presentations

- **Original Prompt** "What's the best way to recover when I stumble in an important executive-level presentation or get a question I can't answer?" **Original Score** 7 / 10
- **Alan Prompt** "Last week I was asked about the latency metrics for our core service. I didn't have the numbers on hand, suspected they were bad, and rambled without saying

anything useful. It came off poorly and I felt I lost credibility. How do I recover better next time?" **Improved Score 9 / 10**

- **Why It's Better** Reveals emotional and cognitive reaction (rambling, credibility loss). Specifies topic (latency), context (core service), and business consequence. Opens opportunity to build a recovery framework, not just a one-off tactic
- **Ethan coaching questions the user should provide** What did you feel in the moment you realized you didn't know the number—panic, embarrassment, or something else? How often are you expected to know these metrics—was this an exception or recurring theme? If your SVP had to write a one-sentence summary of your presence in that moment, what would they write? Why didn't you have the latency number—was it a prep miss, lack of ownership, or unexpected question? What did your manager or skip-level say afterward, if anything? Did they mention how you came across? What was the narrative you *should* have delivered in that moment—and what stopped you from saying it?