



ECFA's New Leadership Standard Q&A

Michael Martin and Jake Lapp

Today's Presenters



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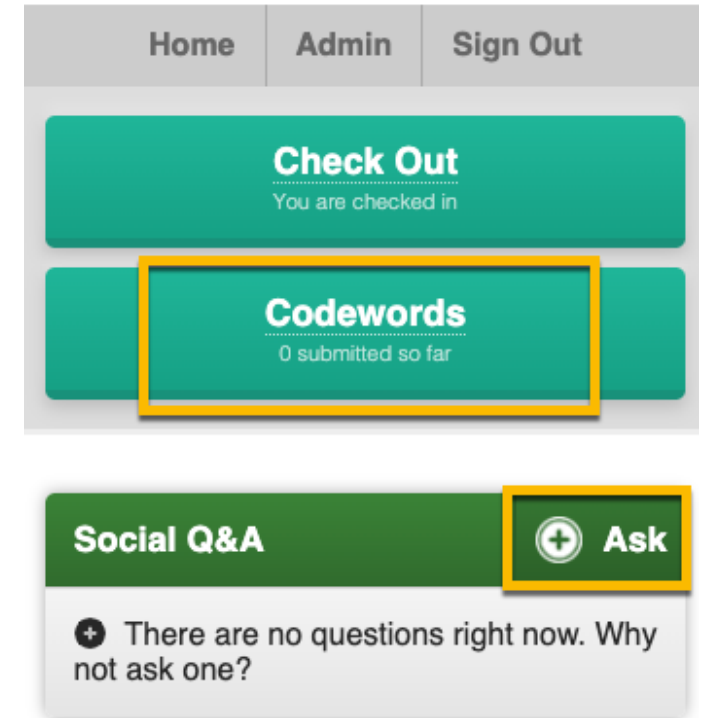
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The New Leadership Standard

Every organization shall proactively care for its leader and support the integrity of its leader in conformity with ECFA's Policy for Excellence in Supporting Leadership Integrity.



What Are We Hearing?

“Glad to see this CEO support. Realistic expectations need to be addressed, especially when you have a high functioning board.”

“The proposed ECFA Leadership Standard is an incredibly important enhancement for those in positions of spiritual leadership. The demands and the stakes of ministry are high, the trappings and temptations many, and the burdens are simply too heavy to carry alone.”



**What led ECFA to
adopt this standard?**



Integrity Standards Enhance Trust



ECFA's Seven Standards of Responsible Stewardship™

Standard 1 – Doctrinal Issues

ECFA requires that each organization subscribe to a written statement of faith that affirms their commitment to the evangelical Christian faith.

Standard 2 – Governance

Ministry failures—or even worse, scandals, can almost always be traced to a breakdown in governance. ECFA requires each organization to have a strong and effective governing body to enhance accountability, maximize excellence in carrying out the Lord's work, and minimize susceptibility to structural breakdown.

Standard 3 – Financial Oversight

The disclosure of the financial statements is key to transparency within the ministry, donors, and the public. ECFA requires each organization to engage with an independent certified public accountant to perform an annual audit, review, or compilation.

Standard 4 – Use of Resources and Compliance with Laws

Accredited organizations must honor the public's trust by fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities. ECFA requires each organization to ensure that all funds are used in conformity with applicable laws and regulations and to fulfill the organization's exempt purposes.

Standard 5 – Transparency

Financial disclosure is the expected and required form of accountability in society, and this represents an even higher standard of openness for Christ-centered organizations. ECFA requires organizations to provide a copies of financial statements and project reports when requested, as well as providing other disclosures as the law may require.

Standard 6 – Compensation-Setting and Related-Party Transactions

This standard assures donors and other supporters that the organization sets compensation and handles financial transactions in the ministry's best interests. ECFA requires every organization to exercise care and n determinations of compensation for the top leader, and integrity in all related party transactions.

Standard 7 – Stewardship of Charitable Gifts

Donors often rely on information the organization provides when deciding whether to support a particular ministry or program. Therefore, organizations are responsible for truthfully representing the facts when communicating with givers. To accomplish this, ECFA requires every organization to anticipate how the typical reader will interpret information. The organization should avoid any words, pictures, graphs, or other information that might cause a typical prospective giver to reach an inaccurate conclusion.

Why ECFA Cares About Healthy Leadership.

ECFA helps Christian nonprofits and churches maintain a healthy and trusted reputation to effectively reach the world for Christ.





Rooted in Scripture

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)



Inspired by ECFA Members

94% of senior leaders and board chairs told ECFA that leadership failures are negatively impacting trust.



Validated by Donors

4 out of 5 Christian donors reported to Barna Research that it would help strengthen their trust in churches and ministries if they took steps to **proactively care for their leader's health and holistic integrity**.



Enhanced Accountability

The Leadership Standard requires that an organization's board engage with its senior leader at least annually to discuss holistic care for its leader and the leader's commitment to upholding biblical principles.



Strengthened Leaders

The Leadership Standard will give leaders much needed support to help them maintain healthy, Christ-centered leadership.

What the New Leadership Standard is **NOT**

- **NOT** about **policing or regulating** the behaviors of ministry leaders.
- **NOT** **prescriptive** in its requirements.
- **NOT** a **legalistic demand** for perfection out of leaders or boards.

About the New Leadership Standard

- Focused on supporting healthy leadership through the board's proactive care for the integrity of the leader as a whole person.
- ECFA-accredited church and ministry boards will **purposefully come alongside senior leaders to establish biblical character expectations** and to be **proactive in offering care** for them.
- Strong support across the diversity of leaders and ministries of ECFA.



Learn more at [ECFA.org/LeadershipStandard](https://ecfa.org/LeadershipStandard)



How will ECFA hold members accountable to the Leadership Standard?



**Is the Leadership
Standard already a
requirement?**



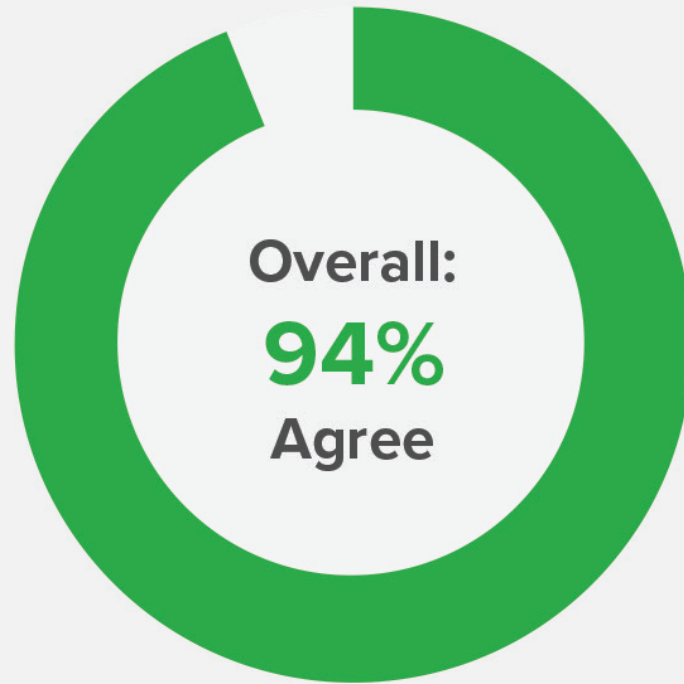
**Will ECFA now have
eight Standards?**



**How does the
Leadership Standard
fit into the mission of
ECFA?**



Impact of Integrity Failures on Trust



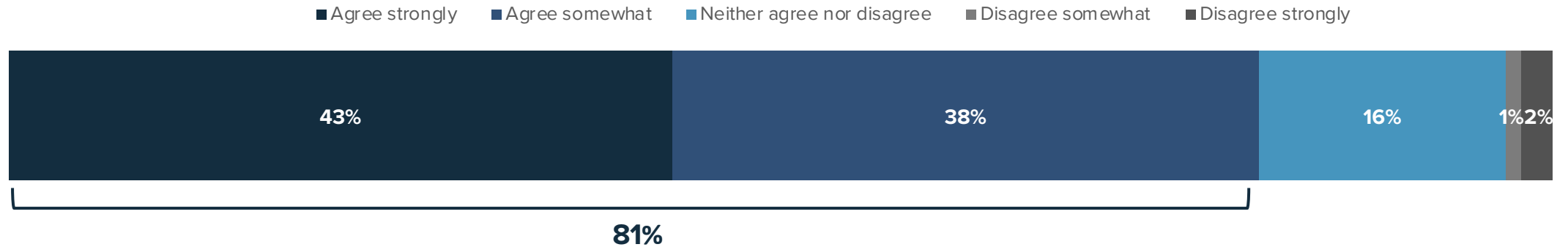
ECFA Members

74% Strongly Agree

20% Agree

Leader Care Strengthens Donor Trust

*“As a donor, it would help strengthen my trust in churches and ministries if they took steps to **proactively care for their leader’s health and holistic integrity**.*”



n=191 U.S. Protestant adults with 2023 charitable giving of >\$500, 31 - February 5, 2024;





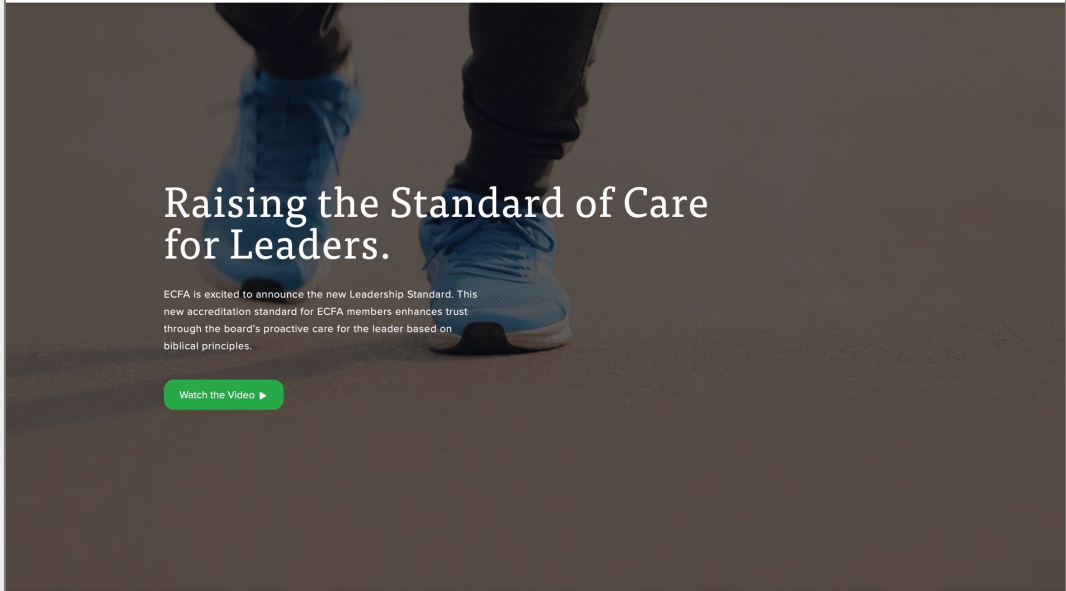
**Can we adopt the
Leadership Standard
early?**



Leadership Standard Landing Page



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Raising the Standard of Care for Leaders.

ECFA is excited to announce the new Leadership Standard. This new accreditation standard for ECFA members enhances trust through the board's proactive care for the leader based on biblical principles.

[Watch the Video ▶](#)


[Read the Draft Standard](#)[Read the Executive Summary](#)

A New Standard Inspired by ECFA Members




The Concern

Far too many leaders are struggling in isolation as they face the unique pressures, demands, and challenges of ministry leadership. There has been a notable rise in reports of burnout, leaders leaving the ministry, and other tragic integrity failures. All these have devastating consequences for leaders, their families, their communities, and the gospel witness of the Church.



Your Feedback

Nearly 800 senior leaders and board chairs responded to an ECFA member survey on this matter. 94% of them told us that leadership failures are negatively impacting trust. However, churches and ministries say they lack practices needed to support leadership integrity and would like to see more support from ECFA in this area.



The Solution

ECFA has developed a new accreditation standard focused on supporting healthy church and ministry leadership through a board's proactive care for the integrity of their organization's senior leader as a whole person. The new Leadership Standard is rooted in biblical truth, balanced in its approach, and packed with urgency – the time for this initiative is now. Caring for our leaders is vital to enhancing trust in churches and ministries.

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