

A Customer Success Story

LifeSize® Results

World Leaders work with LifeSize HD Video Conferencing Solutions to improve communications

Video conferencing transforms meetings at the Global Leadership Foundation.



Global Leadership Foundation

Organization

The Global Leadership Foundation (GLF) exists to make available, discreetly and in confidence, the experience of former leaders to today's decision makers and policy makers. Its purpose is to support political leadership and good governance around the world.

Founded and chaired by F.W. de Klerk, GLF is a network built around its 34 members. These are

either former Heads of State or Government or other distinguished leaders who have first-hand experience of the difficulties of leadership. Its members contribute to the work of GLF as private individuals. They are motivated by a desire to help current leaders face challenges that they themselves once faced. They do so by working in small teams to give advice on either general governance issues, or on specific areas of concern to Heads of Government. The result is that those currently facing complex challenges can benefit from the private counsel of former political leaders.



F.W. de Klerk,
Chairman and
Founder

GLF's approach is unique in that advice is given in strict confidence, with no publicity. This approach bypasses protocol, ensures privacy and facilitates a relationship of trust.

Challenge

 Cut the time, effort and resources required for global board meetings as well as increase the opportunities for leaders to communicate face to face.

Solution

 GLF purchased LifeSize® Room 220™ and five LifeSize Connections™ seats.

Results

 Return on investment was almost achieved following just one board meeting and members are making significant time savings.

Challenge



Like many global organizations, GLF faced a number of challenges when it came to communicating internally and offering advice externally to world leaders.

Board Meetings are a good example, with members of the Board living in seven different countries. While meetings would normally involve considerable travel costs, the issue for Board Members themselves is the time that it takes to travel.

Board members would have to put aside not only time for the meeting itself but also days on either side of it. While this is something Board Members are more than willing to do, the GLF Secretariat is acutely aware that anything that could make this process less time-intensive would improve collaboration.

“Our Members generously give up a lot of their time for GLF so its important that the Secretariat do what it can to make the engagement process easier ,” said Peter Osborn, operations manager at the Global Leadership Foundation.

Another challenge has been the ongoing day-to-day operations of the Secretariat, whose staff are themselves not always in the same country. Given the delicacies of GLF’s work, constant communications between staff is crucial with email being a poor substitute for face-to-face discussions.

“The cost savings are great but what’s even more relevant to our Members is that they only had to give up half a day for the meeting rather than sacrificing three or four days,”

- Peter Osborn, operations manager at the Global Leadership Foundation

Solution



Following a thorough testing phase where members of the Secretariat reviewed a number of different solutions, the Secretariat chose LifeSize video conferencing due to its high quality performance and affordable price point.

GLF purchased a LifeSize Room 220 system for use in the formal meeting room, as well as five LifeSize Connections seats for use by the Secretariat and Board Members.



Results



The video conferencing solutions were put to work immediately with a meeting of the GLF Board re-scheduled from an in-person meeting to a virtual one. Initial set-up costs for the video conferencing solutions were around £16,000, but return on investment was almost achieved from this single event as three trans-Atlantic business class flights did not have to be paid for.

However, cost savings was not the only benefit experienced by the organization.

"The cost savings are great but what's even more relevant to our Members is that they only had to give up half a day for the meeting rather than sacrificing three or four days," said Osborn. "For VIPs like this, time is especially important. When I asked one senior member how the video meeting went he pointed out 'well, it's a lot easier without the jetlag'."

Many GLF members were sceptical of video conferencing to begin with, but after the first Board meeting they were convinced. One Board Member said it was the best video conference she'd ever had.

"Briefing documents and background information have their place, but for many decisions nothing will ever beat personal advice from someone you respect," said Osborn.

"In many cases a half an hour, face-to-face 'virtual' meeting with Members is far more valuable than

the exchange of emails and offers far more than a telephone conversation," he continued. "There's always going to be a place for in-person meetings, given what we do, but video conferencing is changing the way we work in a really positive way."

Aside from the larger board meetings, the Secretariat uses LifeSize Connections to stay in touch for regular team meetings and ad-hoc meetings with members of its network.

In the future, Osborn hopes to expand the way video conferencing is used within the Global Leadership Foundation as more Members are convinced of its merits.



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CS_GLF_EN_0713

