**Pathways to Employment (PTE)**,   
**a federal Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, brought together people with disabilities, employers, businesses, government, and providers to increase competitive employment of people with disabilities and to meet Minnesota’s workforce needs.**

Competitive employment is centerpiece of a quality life style. It provides positive identity, a meaningful place in community, and an adequate standard of living that allows for more than subsistence level survival. It incorporates personal choice, self-direction, and inclusiveness – all important policy goals for Minnesota.

To accomplish this goal, the PTE grant addressed systemic change in two very different, but complex, systems—**employment and disability services**. The project team used a variety of innovative tactics to initiate systemic change, including:

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| Adaptive Action Step 1:  What? | Align diverse activities with a simple strategic plan  Encourage innovation by imposing only essential constraints  Use existing infrastructure as a starting point for innovation |
| Adaptive Action Step 2:  So what? | Adapt to unexpected opportunities when they emerge  Draw on multiple funding sources to support a single vision  Adjust to different organizational structures and cultures |
| Adaptive Action Step 3:  Now what? | Invest in networks for information and collaboration  Develop & implement electronic communications  Focus on systemic change, not the project |

These tactics, though somewhat unconventional, were necessary for PTE to work at the intersections of sectors, agencies, levels of government to create new pathways to competitive employment of people with disabilities. PTE supported many distinct activities and initiatives, all focused on six strategies in the original plan. Four overarching systemic impacts resulted from the work of PTE that will embed and sustain the paradigm shift initiated by the program:

* Information access and assessment—DB101, Disability Linkage Line, and MnCHOICES inform and encourage competitive employment.
* Career development—schools and WorkForce Centers offer information and support for people with disabilities as they seek and retain competitive employment
* Employer engagement—PTE informs and supports employers. DER provides information to private sector employers, and some public employers engage in State as a Model Employer (SME) program to build capacity and commitment.
* Policy development—health care, education, transportation, and housing policy, as well as policy regarding employment and disabilities, shift perceptions and practices to support competitive employment.

PTE partners will support sustainability and leverage the investment through:

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| Communications | Keep the competitive employment message alive |
| Collaborations | Maintain productive relationships |
| Measurement & Continuous Improvement | Engage in adaptive action (observe, decide, and act) |
| Policies, Procedures, Processes | Support competitive employment everywhere |
| Resources | Think beyond the traditional boundaries |
| Skills and Knowledge | Build capacity for self and others |

The PTE Systemic Review Leadership Overview provides a summary of the challenges, strategies, accomplishments, lessons learned, and opportunities for sustainability for PTE. For more information about PTE and other aspects of this Systemic Review, contact [PTE.Public@state.mn.us](mailto:PTE.Public@state.mn.us).