

# Utilities

## US

Sector Overview

### Executive Summary > Overview

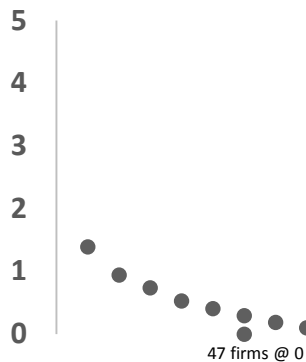
#### Top 3 Strengths

- Customer service efforts evident
- 4 firms using Employee Resource Group
- A few firms signal recruiting efforts

#### Top Weaknesses

- Strong focus on compliance
- Talent/recruiting not widespread

**TABLE A – Utilities Sector Peer  
RoD Results**



#### Executive Summary

There are 54 Utilities firms that qualify for our United States universe of 1011 firms. 1 of these companies rank in the top 100 in United States.

The bulk of the observable activity amongst Utilities firms surrounds ‘rate subsidies’ given to People with Disabilities (PWD) likely driven by legislative/charitable demands. The business value of these efforts are questionable and the optics counter-productive. A few firms have incorporated models into their advertising efforts and make billing statements available in alternate formats such as large print or braille.

Many of these companies can leverage PWD to both improve safety and better understand/re-structure a process-laden path to get ‘electrons’ from the source to the end-user. The same principles that apply in a distribution center can be applied to a dam or power grid. A potential for 20% annual cost savings make this worthy of serious investigation. 4 firms in this sector are using Employee Resource Groups to assist with coordinating firm-wide strategy and activity.

Aside from a few compliance-driven ‘accommodation statements’, this sector is not recruiting in disability. Firms are focused on compliance, charity or ‘doing the right thing’. A massive shift to a success-focused message must occur to satisfy customer (government) demands to hire PWD in material numbers.

Overall, opportunity exists to build significant value in PWD markets by reaching out to customers and engaging in activities to reduce costs.

#### Overall Result



#### Customer Result



#### Talent Result



#### Productivity Result



**■ Sector Minimum**  
**■ Sector Average**  
**■ Sector Maximum**

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### The RoD Model > Capturing Shareholder Value

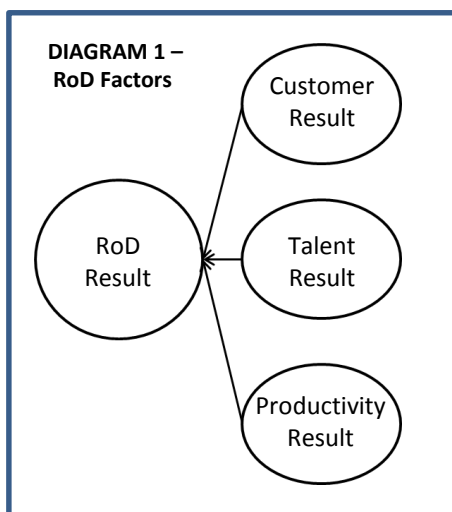
Cambridge Dictionaries defines shareholder value as “the total worth of a company to its shareholders”. Many things can increase shareholder value, such as new products and services, entering a new market, and streamlined operations. The basis of the Return on Disability model is to measure those activities relative to disability that add to shareholder value. Specifically, we identify actions that:

- 1) add to net revenue and/or
- 2) reduce ongoing operational costs

The 20 disability-related KPIs that RoD measures within organizations ultimately impact one of these two fundamental building blocks of value creation. We focus on value for one simple reason: to shift the disability paradigm from ‘added cost and effort’ to ‘added value’ by demonstrating the shareholder value of disability.

#### **Customer** – *Delighted Customers Lead to New and Enhanced Revenue Opportunities*

For most established brands, finding a new way to talk to a mature market is the Holy Grail. From a purely demographic point of view, 53% of the entire consumer marketplace is touched by disability. The value-add comes from the ‘halo effect’ of talking about inclusion, empowerment and innovation that comes from a focus on disability. Consumer-facing firms drive top-line growth by leveraging insights from PWD, refining messaging, and incorporating insights from disability to enhance the customer experience.



#### **Talent** – *Finding Great People and Keeping Them at Their Best*

The war for talent is real, and PWD represent a new pool to tap as part of the talent acquisition strategy. While the pool is real, it requires some effort to address. Understanding the space and connecting talent to core business goals are good first steps. Diversity recruiting has taught practitioners a few things: a) robust pipelines precede hiring; b) PWD must be attracted to the firm through brand appropriate messaging, and, c) done properly, the firm must be aligned internally on the rationale in hiring PWD. It is critical for companies to open their employee base to PWD in a robust way, which initially will be a high touch effort. Data and experience shows that this approach results in high productivity, higher quality and higher returns.

#### **Productivity** – *Leveraging Insights from Disability to Drive Efficiency*

Innovation is born from extreme environments, solving for a set of demands outside the norm. PWD do things in ways that “Joe Average” just does not think about. They are extreme users of technology and infrastructure. If one can solve for ‘extreme users’, one innovates applications for the average user. By empowering a line worker with one hand; who happens to have low vision, to reduce a 100 step process to 23 (simply because it is easier for her), it just became easier for all while removing complexity and cost from the operation. Firms acting in this area today are seeing efficiency gains in the area of 20%. This can also be applied to product development.