

# Advanced Weatherization Strategies for Lowering Household Energy Costs:

*The Softer Side of Weatherization: How soft skills and client relations can increase impact and improve program outcomes*

*February 26, 2026*

*2:00pm ET / 1:00pm CT / 12:00pm MT / 11:00am PT*

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# VaShawn Johnson

Training Manager – ICRT – Champaign, IL



- Is a recognized subject matter expert, instructor, and national trainer in weatherization
- More than 13 years of experience in the field of home performance and energy efficiency.
- Holds several Weatherization and Building Performance certifications including BPI-EA, BA-P, QCI, HHE, and IDL.
- Works with Indoor Climate Research and Training (ICRT), with expertise in health and safety, building fundamentals, diagnostics, and the science behind how homes manage heat and energy.
- Was named to the Board of Directors of the Building Performance Association (BPA) in 2025
- Bridges practical field work and broader industry blending technical expertise, on-the-ground experience, and ability to empower others through education and collaboration.

# Learning Objectives

- Understanding client relations and the client experience
- Establishing the foundation principles from initial application through QCI
- Exploring how to navigating soft skills in weatherization

# WHY CLIENT RELATIONS MATTER



# WHY FOCUS ON CLIENT RELATIONS

- **Increased Client Satisfaction:** Happy clients are more likely to recommend your services.
- **Improved Program Reputation:** Positive word-of-mouth builds trust in the community.
- **Reduced Complaints and Conflicts:** Clear communication and empathy can prevent misunderstandings.
- **Better Project Outcomes:** Engaged clients can provide valuable insights and ensure the work meet their needs.
- **Alignment with Program Goals:** Positive client experiences contribute to the overall success and sustainability of the weatherization program.

# BUILDING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS



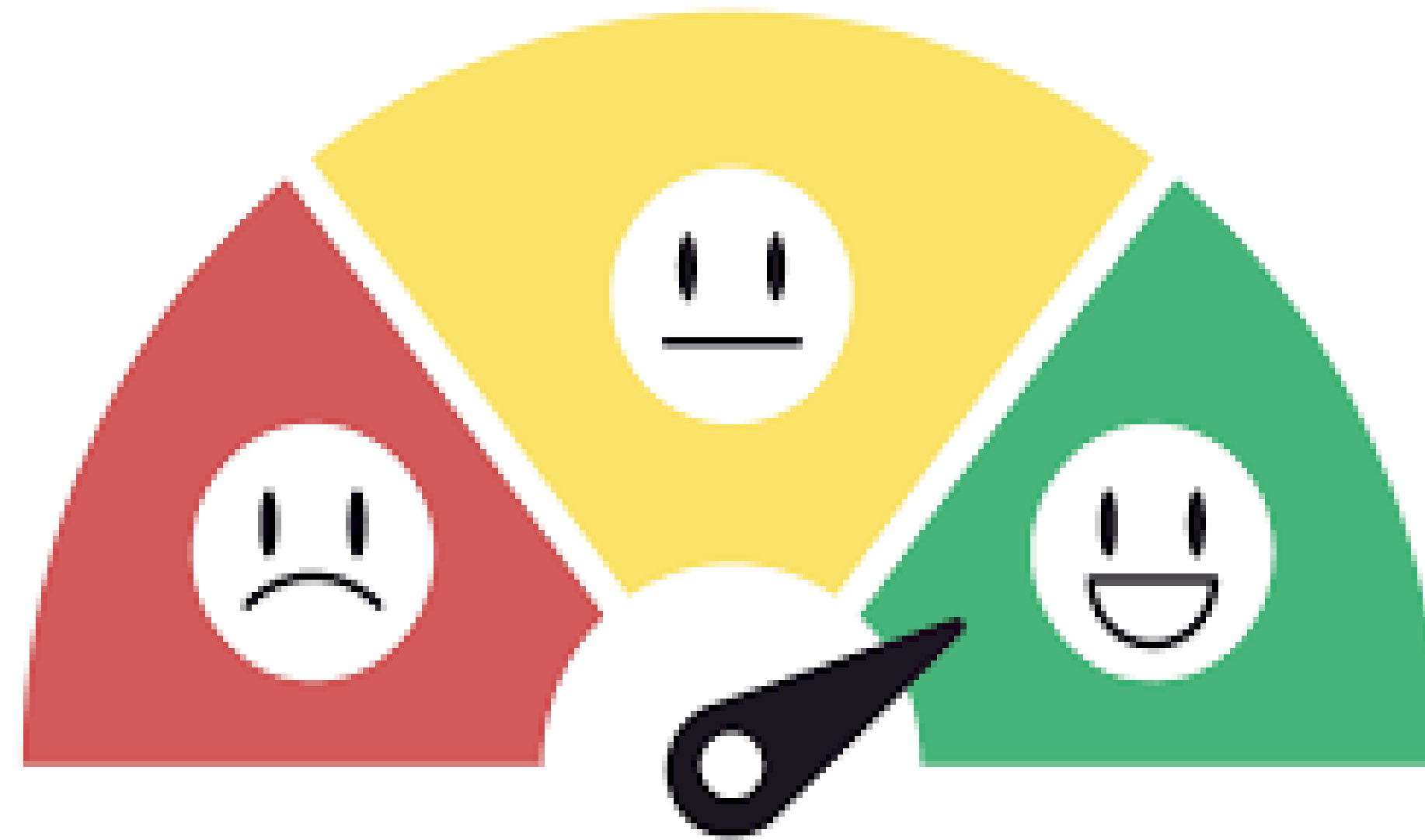
# Building Lasting Relationship Cont.

- Positive client relations are essential for a successful weatherization program.
- Focus on respect, communication, and professionalism in all interactions.
- Understanding the client journey helps tailor your approach.
- Proactive communication can prevent many issues.
- Your role in building strong client relationships is vital to our program's success.

# SUPPORTING YOUR CLIENT RELATIONS EFFORTS



# UNDERSTANDING THE CLIENT EXPERIENCE



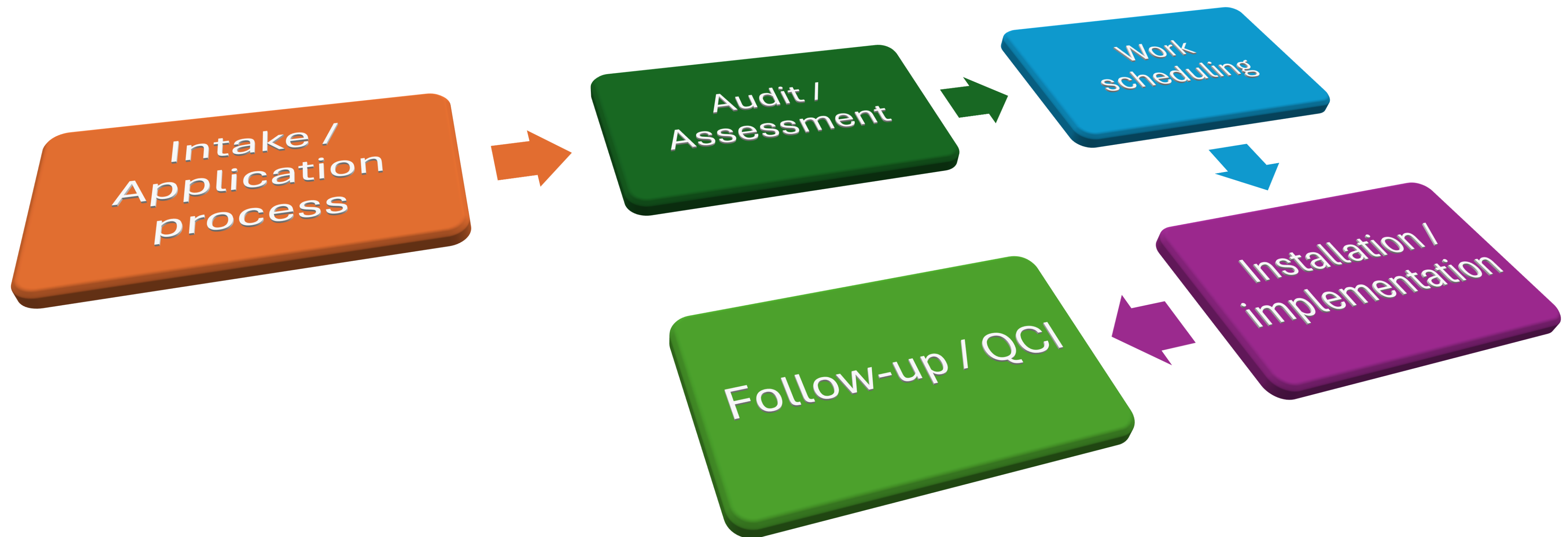


Here are six (6) principles that are needed for a better client experience



# THE PROCESS

Stages from application to QCI



# INTAKE / APPLICATION

## Intake / Application process

- Be welcoming and patient.
- Clearly explain eligibility requirements and the application process.
- Answer questions thoroughly.

# ASSESSMENT / AUDIT

## Assessment / Audit

- Explain the purpose of the audit.
- Involve the client in the process, when appropriate.
- Clearly communicate findings and proposed measures.

# WORK SCHEDULING

## Work Scheduling

- Keep realistic timelines and keep clients informed of any changes.
- Be flexible and accommodating where possible.

# INSTALLATION / IMPLEMENTATION

## Installation / implementation

- Treat the client's home with respect.
- Communicate daily progress and any disruptions.
- Answer questions about the work being done.

# FOLLOW-UP / QCI

## Follow-up / QCI

- Explain how to operate any new equipment.
- Provide energy-saving tips.
- Offer a point of contact for future questions.
- Make the client aware of the quality control inspection, and the possibility of future inspections for quality assurance.

# NAVIGATING CHALLENGES



# Soft skills and weatherization

- **Stay Calm and Professional:** Even when faced with frustration.
- **Listen Actively:** Let the client express their concerns fully.
- **Acknowledge Their Feelings:** Show empathy and understanding.
- **Focus on Finding Solutions:** Work collaboratively to address the issue.
- **Know Your Limits:** When to escalate issues to a supervisor.
- **Document Everything:** Keep a record of interactions and solutions.

# Soft skills continues

- Standardized communication templates (e.g., appointment confirmations, progress updates).
- FAQs for clients.
- Training materials on communication and conflict resolution.
- Feedback mechanisms (surveys, comment cards).
- Internal protocols for handling client complaints.

# THANK YOU!



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For more information contact Keesha M. Johnson, Project Director,  
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Meetings run from June-November 2026 including in-person and virtual meetings.



# WAP February Webinar Series:

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# Thank you!

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