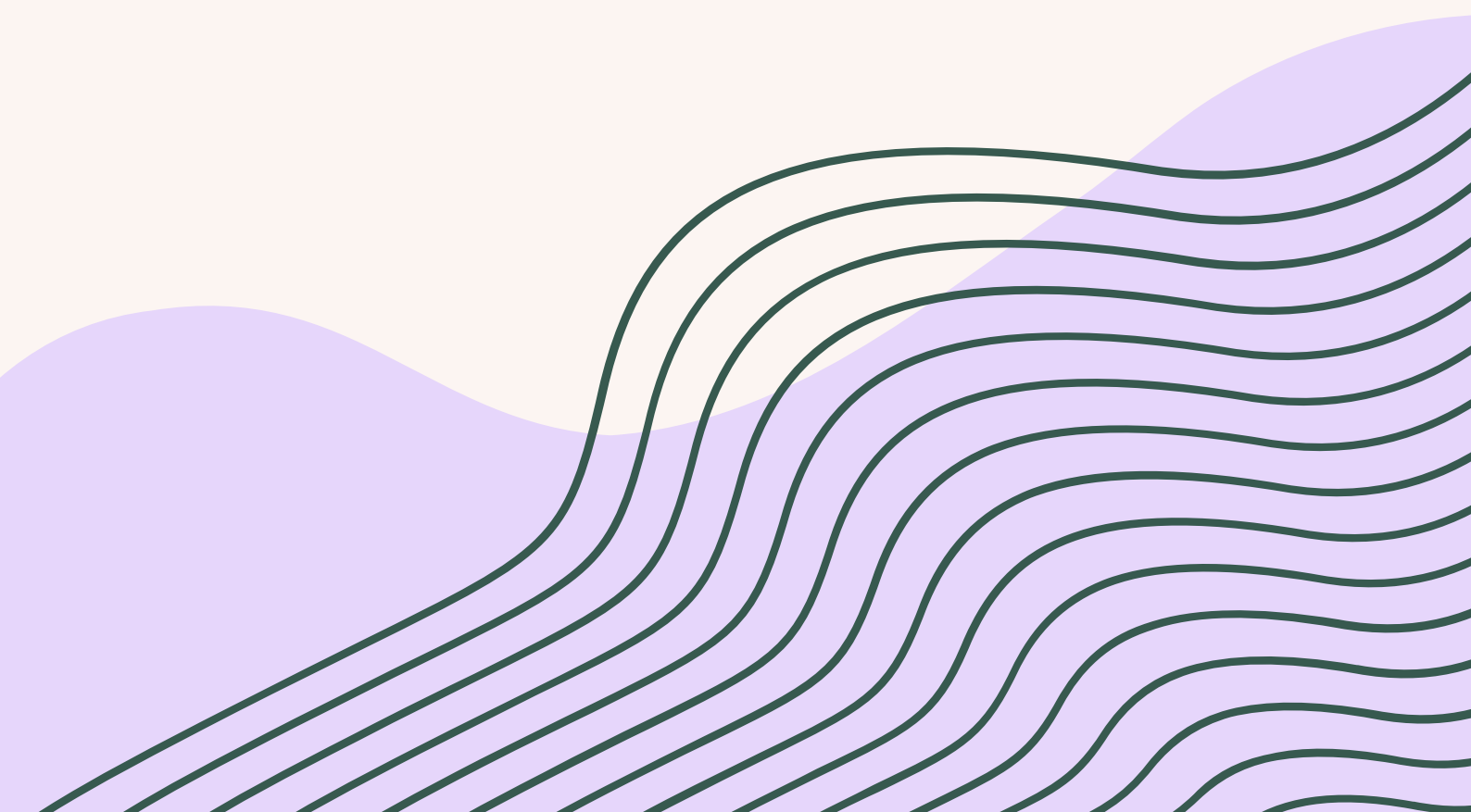




How to Buy Time When the Pressure's On

WHAT TO DO WHEN HR CALLS YOU INTO A LAST-MINUTE MEETING





YOU ARE ALLOWED TO ASK FOR MORE TIME

If your workplace has:

- called you into a meeting
- asked for information
- asked you to provide feedback on a process or document regarding your employment

within 24 to 48 hours, **you are allowed to ask for more time.** This guide will explain why, and how.

First, some context.

These meetings are often unexpected or last-minute. They could involve decisions or information around your livelihood, your wellbeing, or your reputation. I don't say this to scare you. I say this so that you know, **you have every right to respond carefully and with consideration, and to seek advice before you do.**

It's not just the meeting that's overwhelming. It's the *speed*, the *tone*, and the *timing*. Being asked to respond quickly, especially when you're already emotionally taxed, is a form of pressure that triggers your fight-or-flight response.

You might feel confused right now, or panicked, or frozen, or even ashamed. These are all normal reactions. You don't have to push through in silence. Being put under pressure like this is often a tactic - intentional or not - that can throw you off balance and lead to decisions that affect your employment. **You have another option.**



YOU HAVE A LEGAL RIGHT TO RESPOND - DON'T LET ANYONE RUSH YOU

Under **Section 4 of the Employment Relations Act (2000)**, your employer has a duty to act in *good faith*. That includes giving you a **real and reasonable opportunity** to respond to any proposed decisions or actions - like feedback, or a meeting - that could negatively affect your job, your duties, or your employment conditions.

Translation: you have the legal right to take the time you need to understand the issues they've brought up, seek support, and respond meaningfully. Rushing a process is not just unfair, it could be legally questionable.

You are not being difficult by asking for more time. You are asking your employer to comply with their legal obligations.

DO THIS RIGHT NOW

Write an immediate email (or text message, though email is usually better) to your manager, HR, or both (use the 'CC' function). You can say something like:

Thank you for the notification. Given the seriousness of the matter and the stress this has caused, I am taking some time to seek appropriate support and prepare myself adequately. I will be in touch shortly to propose a new time for the meeting that allows for this. I appreciate your understanding as I take steps to ensure I can engage in this process constructively and fairly.





WHAT TO DO WHILE YOU WAIT FOR A RESPONSE

There are three important things that can help you to prepare for this meeting, so that you feel equipped to step in and act professionally while protecting your employment. You can:

- **Journal or record** a verbal download to get your thoughts and feelings down, and get clear on what has led to this situation.
- **Review any documents**, emails, or meeting notes that you have access to.
- **Reach out to Off the Record** for a private, strategic session.

WHAT IF THEY IGNORE YOUR REQUEST OR PUSH THROUGH ANYWAY?

If your employer refuses to delay the meeting or continues the process without allowing you time to respond or get advice, this may breach their obligation under **Section 4 of the Act**.

Make a note of:

- The date/time you made your request for more time.
- How you sent it (email/text).
- Their *exact* response (feel free to take a screenshot and keep the picture).

This information can be useful later if you need to escalate. Even if the meeting goes ahead, you're not without options. **Stay calm, make notes during the meeting, and seek advice as soon as possible.**





THIS IS EXACTLY THE MOMENT OFF THE RECORD WAS CREATED FOR

You don't have to go through this process feeling out of control, or like you don't know what to do next. **You don't have to do it alone.**



I'M MEL, AN EX-CORPORATE HR PROFESSIONAL WITH 30+ YEARS' EXPERIENCE RUNNING THE EXACT PROCESS YOU'RE GOING THROUGH RIGHT NOW.

Book a one-on-one session with me to get thorough, informed guidance on how to navigate this process carefully.

BOOK YOUR SESSION