I would assemble furniture quickly if I could, but I can't.

Activity One –Let's read some information about WOULD SHOULD AND COULD and then put it into practice.

should

Should is used to give advice and make recommendations and to talk about obligation, duty and what is expected to happen. Reference is to the present and the future. Should is similar to must but is not as strong as must:

* You should always think about your target audience when you decide what to put on the intranet.

should and should have

Should combines with the perfect infinitive to form should have + past participle when we want to talk about past events that did not happen, but should have happened.

We should have talked to the COMAM team before we decided on our strategy for the Rouan opening.

would

If we want to talk about an unreal or unlikely situation that might arise now or in the future, we use a past tense in the if-clause and would + infinitive in the main clause. Compare the following and note that would is often abbreviated to 'd:

- How would you manage, if I wasn't here to help you? ~ I'd manage somehow. I would take lessons with GoFluent !
-

would have

If we want to refer to the past and make a statement about things that did not happen, we need to use had + past participle in the if clause and would have constructions in the main clause. Note in these sentences that we can use 'd as the abbreviation for both had in the if-clause and would in the main clause:

* If youd've seen the memo sooner you wouldn't have been ready.

could

Could can be used to ask for permission, to make a request and express ability in the past. Compare the following:

* Could I ask you to e mail me the questions again with my corrections.

* I could already recite the marseilleise by the time I was six.

could have

As with would have, and should have, could have is used to talk about the past and refers to things that people could have done in the past, but didn't attempt to do or succeed in doing:

* I could have gone to Stockholm, if I'd passed my exams.

* If he'd worked harder, I'm sure he could have worked for IKEA

Note the difference between would have and could have in the following two examples. Would have indicates certainty that he would have won if he had tried harder, could have indicates that it is a possibility. Might have is similar in meaning to could have, although the possibility is perhaps not quite as great:

* If he'd tried a bit harder, he would have won the contest.
* If he'd tried a bit harder, he could have won the contest.
* If he'd tried a bit harder, he might have won the contest.

should have / could have / wouldn't have

Note the way in which all three of these modals are combined in these exchanges which refer to a meeting that has just taken place:

* Why did you come to the meeting? It didn't need both of us. You should have known that I would be there. ~ How could I have known you'd be there? I haven't spoken to you for a fortnight! ~ If I'd known you were intending to go, I certainly wouldn't have gone

You will sometimes see would have written as would've, should have as should've and could have as could've.

Watch the youtube video -
The Chaser - Ikea DIY Disaster

Activity Two : Answer the questions.

1. What should they have done with Poang ?
2. Could you assemble Poang easily ?
3. If he had tried harder do you think Craig would have been able to assemble Poang ?
4. Who could he have sold the finished item to in the opinion of the presenter ?
5. What went wrong when they assembled the sofa ?
6. What went wrong when they assembled the bed ?
7. Should Gorm be part of a bed ?
8. Should IKEA have refunded the first two items ?
9. Would you refund these items ?
10. If they someone had returned one of these items would you refund them ?
11. Could you give any advice to people in general about assembling items ?
12. What did the IKEA employee tell the client he should do at the end of the video ?

Activity Three : Answer the questions.

- If you were responsible for printing the instructions, what **would** you do to make it easier to assemble IKEA furniture ?
- What do you think **should** be done to make people feel more positive about assembling flatpack furniture ?
- What **could** customers do to make it easier to assemble their furniture ?
- How **could** IKEA communicate with the general public about the assembly instructions of their furniture in order to make people feel more positive about it.
- How **would** you react if you had spent several hours going round the showroom, queuing to pay for your goods, loading them into your car and then once you got home you found the instructions impossible to understand.