

CULTURE INSIGHTS 2026

Spain, SMEs & Leadership Futures

By Beth Camprubí on 13/01/2026

From Awareness to Perspective: How Spanish SMEs Can Foresee the Future by Designing Micro-Cultures

In my previous article, I focused on **awareness**: making visible the cultural forces shaping leadership and decision-making in Spain today. This follow-up moves one step further into **perspective**.

Because awareness alone does not change outcomes.

Perspective is what allows leaders to **anticipate, prioritise, and act intentionally** within the system they operate in.

The Cultural Lens We're Using

To ground this reflection, I draw on **Hofstede Insights**, particularly two dimensions where Spain scores high:

- **Power Distance (PDI)** > hierarchy matters, decisions concentrate at the top
- **Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)** > ambiguity creates stress, structure feels safer

These dimensions are neither “good” nor “bad”.

They simply describe **how societies tend to organise authority, communication, and risk**.

The challenge appears when **SMEs**, which depend on agility and fast learning, operate inside a system that naturally favours caution and centralised control.

Perspective Tip #1: Look for What Is Already Working

In high-UAI environments, the brain is wired to scan for risk.

A simple but powerful shift is to ask:

What is already working, even in a small way, that we can build on?

This question:

- reduces anxiety
- restores a sense of agency
- creates clarity without denying reality

From a Solution-Focused (ICF-aligned) perspective, progress accelerates when teams learn to **amplify what's useful**, not only fix what's broken.

Perspective Tip #2: Notice Where Communication Stops

In high-PDI cultures, communication often follows vertical lines.
Perspective means asking:

Who needs to talk to whom more regularly, but currently doesn't?

Future problems rarely arrive suddenly.
They usually grow silently at **hierarchical boundaries** where:

- feedback stops
- assumptions go untested
- decisions are delayed

Leaders who foresee better futures are those who **reopen conversation channels early**.

Perspective Tip #3: Imagine the Preferred Future. Then Shrink the Step

Instead of asking *"How do we transform?"*, perspective invites a gentler, more effective question:

If we imagine a better 2026, what is one small step we could take before the end of this year?

SMEs do not change through revolutions.
They evolve through **consistent micro-moves**:

- small wins create momentum
- momentum builds culture
- culture shapes the future

This is foresight in practice.

Looking Ahead: Leaders Create Micro-Cultures

Spain's national culture is unlikely to suddenly become low-PDI or low-UAI, and it doesn't need to.
What truly matters is what leaders **intentionally design inside their organisations**.

Healthy SME micro-cultures tend to cultivate:

- shared leadership
- clarity without rigidity
- psychological safety
- curiosity and co-responsibility
- future-oriented conversation habits

Even within a heavy system, **micro-cultures can remain agile, human, and innovative**.

Where This Leads Next (BeMAPS episode #2 - Culture)

This reflection connects directly with **BeMAPS #2: Culture**, where culture is explored not as theory, but as:

- everyday conversations
- decision-making habits
- small choices that compound over time

If awareness helps us *see* the system, **perspective helps us navigate it and foresee what's coming next. Here at (free): _____**

Final Reflection

Culture does not change overnight. But the experience people have inside your organisation, and the future it is moving toward, **starts changing the moment leaders shift how they look, listen, and ask questions.**

That is where foresight begins.

Coming Next in *Culture Insights 2026*

In the next article, I'll widen the lens and **compare Spain with other cultural contexts** using Hofstede Insights, not to rank cultures, but to **learn from different ways of handling power, uncertainty, and decision-making.**

Through a **practical case study**, we'll explore:

- how other cultures design leadership and communication,
- what Spain already does well (and often underestimates),
- and which **concrete, transferable solutions** SMEs can adapt to their own reality.

Perspective grows when we learn across cultures.

—

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Let's connect the dots!

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